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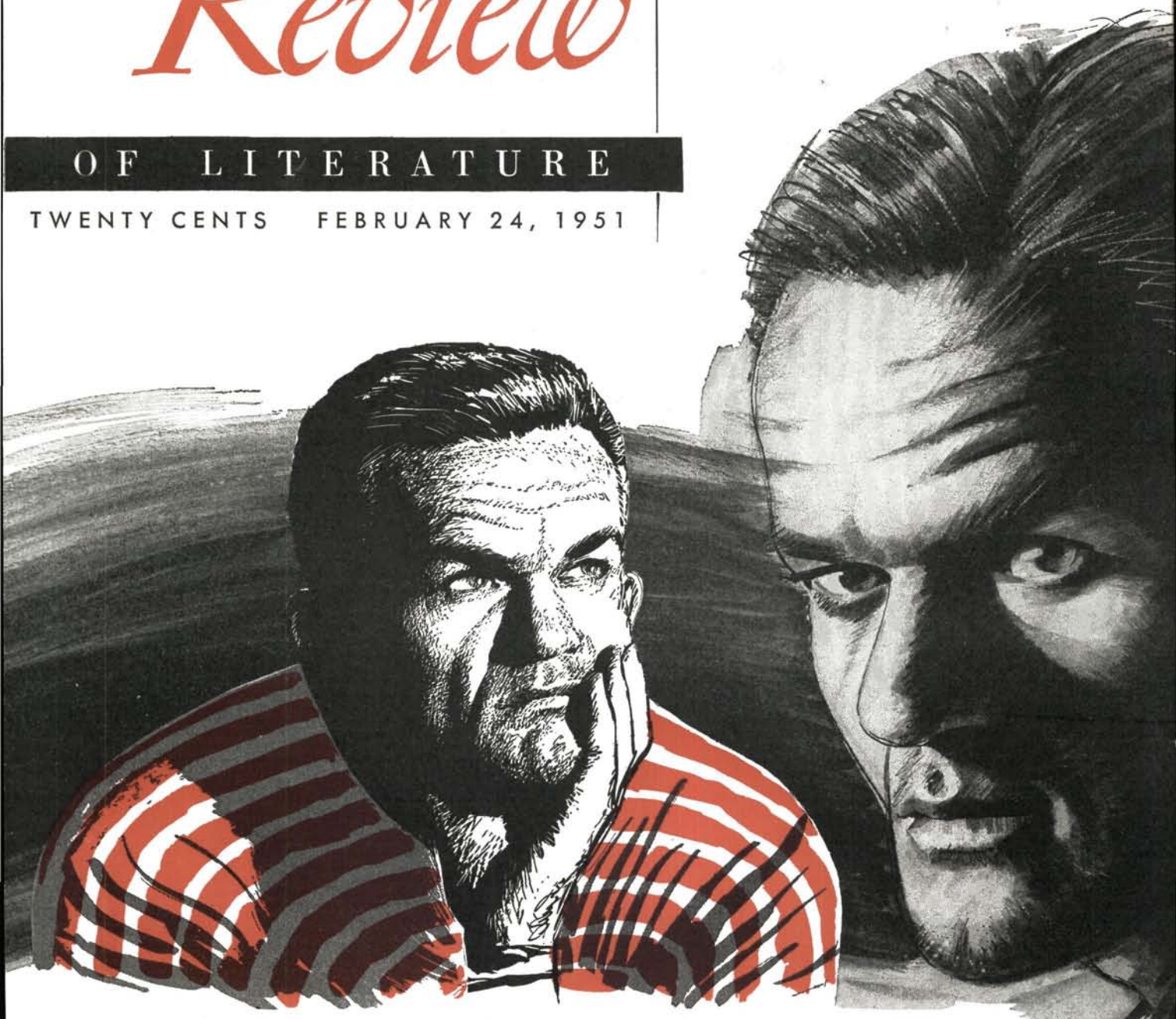

James Jones, author of "From Here to Eternity." (See page 11)

Fitzgerald: The Double Man

By MALCOLM COWLEY

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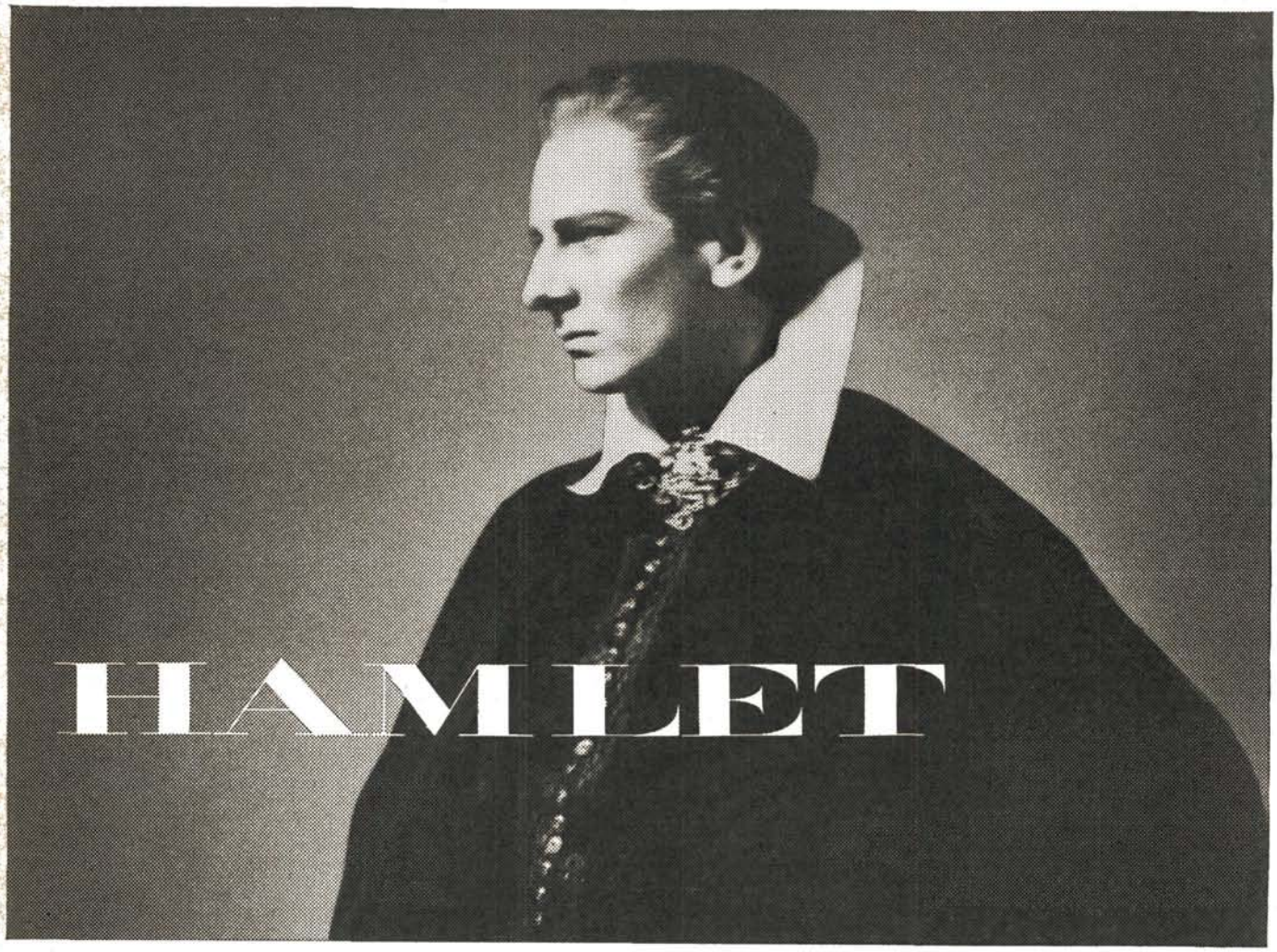

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TRADE Winds

PITTSBURGH AND ANN ARBOR

BOOK DEALERS in the Pittsburgh area have been experiencing the kind of winter that shouldn't happen even to my faithful reader Walter Winchell. No sooner had they dug themselves out from under a paralyzing early-December blizzard than a truckmen's strike tied up all deliveries until just a few days before Christmas. More snow and unusual cold in January hampered their efforts to recoup losses. Woes had been put aside, however, the day I visited Pittsburgh, to do honor to Bill McGhee, buyer for Kaufman's book department for a solid thirty-nine years and one of the most respected and best-loved men in the industry. The town's leading literary lights, journalists, and friendly competitors like Joe Estabrook and Arthur Bergholz gathered at the festive board, and when Mrs. Oliver (Fritzi) Kaufman, the Perle Mesta of those parts, appeared in an aura of chinchilla and orchids everybody knew he was present at one of the premier social events of the season. The only way Oliver Kaufman and Lorraine Huested could hornswoggle Bill into attending his own testimonial luncheon was to convince him the party was for *me*. When the truth dawned upon him and fulsome praises had been heaped upon him by varied orators he rose to his feet, looked benignly at everybody for a moment, said "I thank you all very much"—and sat down. Bill has the proper length for a thank-you speech down pat.

PITTSBURGH'S December snowstorm was so severe that all the large stores were closed tight for three days. Drifts twenty feet high blocked thoroughfares, and icy roads outside the city limits caused further complications. Kaufman's won the gratitude of the community by opening its doors on Sunday at the height of the storm

to distribute emergency wares. Hundreds fought their way to the store to obtain shovels, pickaxes, and galoshes. The staff that served them showed enough zeal to merit promotions. I. D. Wolff, president of the store, manned the only elevator in operation. The general merchandise manager, Samuel Sugarman, was seen staggering from the stockroom under an armload of galoshes. Oliver Kaufman, vice president of the store, handled the snow-shovel counter. Later one of the executives accomplished a feat reminiscent of New York's blizzard in 1947. His car was buried in a snow drift, and he spent an hour of back-breaking work digging it out. When he finished he found that it wasn't his car. A man who had been watching him appreciatively from a warm, cozy corner inside the store stepped into the car, delivered a hearty "thank you," and drove off into the night.

IN THE AUDIENCE that attended my talk at the Edgeworth Club in the

swanky suburb of Sewickley was a sprightly lady of ninety-two, who had not let the snowstorm impede her daily rounds in the slightest degree. When a grandson (aged fifty) sought to restrain her from bucking the elements she reminded him sharply, "I'll have you know I'm no more interested in dying than you are." She boasts that she was followed on the street by a masher only two summers ago. "He lurked behind me for blocks," she chuckles, "but finally mustered the nerve to catch up and peer into my face. When he saw it he sort of staggered for a moment and muttered, 'Oh, my God!'" . . . Sewickley's citizens were busy gobbling up autographed copies of "Never Give the Heart," a first novel by a popular local girl named Ann Willets. Another Pittsburgh novelist in high favor is Gladys Schmitt, author of "The Gates of Aulis" and "David the King.". . . One member of the Edgeworth Club sat haughtily by himself near the fireplace. "He's so conceited," confided the lady next to me, "he even has his X-rays retouched.". . . An outstanding social event of the Sewickley season was the hunt tea given by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pursglove, Jr., to fete "widows, widowers, and orphans of the hunt." The general idea, read the invitation, was to recognize the plight of unfortunates to whom "brush means Fuller, giving tongue is wife's noises, a good fencer parries thrusts with a rapier, a rising scent is inflation, a waving stern is a sinking ship, whip means prunes, and drawing a covert is caused by a sudden drop in the temperature at night."

FROM THE ELEGANCE of Sewickley to the crowded campus of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor was a sleeper-jump indeed. Arrived at my dormitory I found myself under the expert guidance of Carl Brandt and Allan Seager, author of "Equinox." Herb Mayes, editor of *Good Housekeeping*, lists Seager as one of the finest short-story writers in America, and I heartily agree. Together we visited three of the outstanding booksellers of the town: Mrs. Florence Slater, George Sallade at Wahr's, and Don Brown at Ulrich's. All of them reported that book sales were unusually brisk. The aisles were crowded with students. There's something about a good college bookstore that makes every publisher's blood tingle!

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN is one of the biggest and best in the country. There are at present 22,000 students, but at the rate the nineteen-year-old males are enlisting or being drafted the 1952 prospects are steeped in uncertainty. The campus boasts any number of imposing buildings, but the wide divergence of architectural styles makes a visitor's eyes blink. I hadn't realized that the 97,000-seat football bowl is only forty-odd miles (via express highway) from the heart of Detroit and can be reached in less time than it takes a New Yorker to travel from Brooklyn to Columbia's Baker Field. Big games at the Michigan bowl are invariably a sell-out, and this year's victory at the Rose Bowl only enhanced the great popularity of Michigan's coach, Bennie Oosterbaan. Unlike coaches at certain other "Big Ten" institutions, Oosterbaan seems immune to the interference of meddling "old grads," although when his charges dropped their 1950 season-opener to Michigan State, 14-7, *The Daily* (tops in college newspapers) kiddingly headlined "Loss of One in a Row Endangers Oosterbaan's Job."

WHEN DAVE CRIPPEN came over to the Student Union to interview me for *The Daily* he brought with him the

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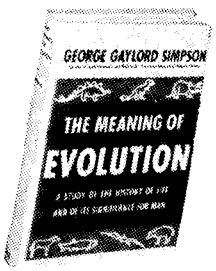

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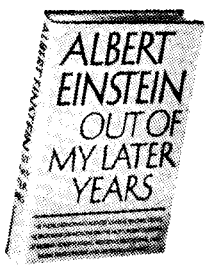

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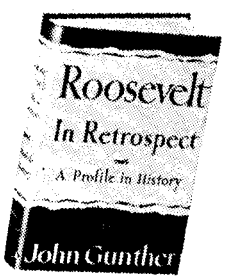

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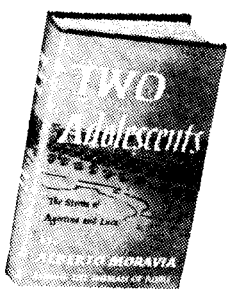

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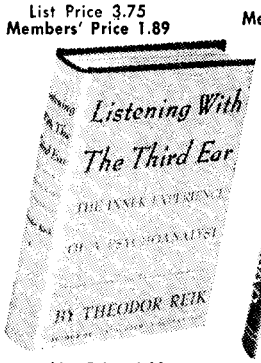

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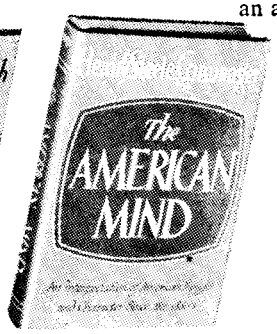

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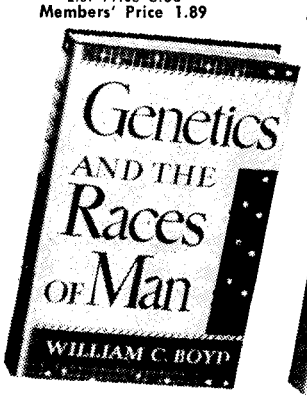

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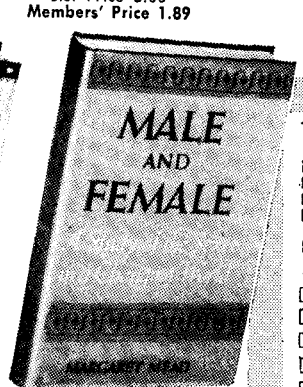

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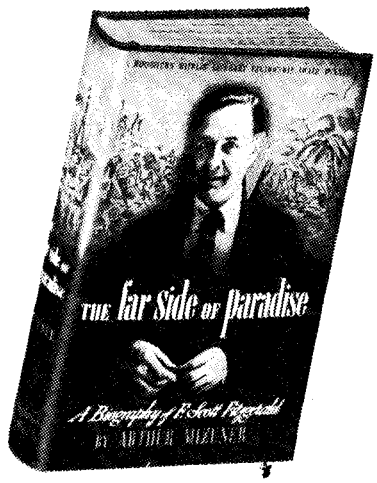

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current issue of *Gargoyle*, the University's humorous magazine. I was delighted to see that this was one campus publication, at least, that wasn't devoting all its efforts to unsuccessful imitations of *The New Yorker*. The cartoons were raucous and uninhibited; the jokes had that well-remembered tang of typical undergraduate wit. Examples: She: I saw a Texas Ranger carrying two rifles. He: That's nothing. I saw a cow-girl packing a pair of 38's. . . . Didja hear about the pregnant bedbug? It's going to have a baby in the spring. . . . Girl: I nearly fainted when the fellow I was out with last night asked me for a kiss. Boy: Baby, you're gonna die when you hear what I have to say. . . . Sam: What did the usherette say when her strap broke? Ed: I dunno. What did she say? Sam: I have two down in front. . . . Golly, those stories do remind me of the 1920 Columbia *Jester*! ("What do you

mean, the 1920 *Jester*?" interrupted my secretary, Jezebel. "They remind *me* of the 1951 TRADE WINDS.")

I HAD DINNER with the University's able and popular prexy, Dr. Alex Ruthven (he journeyed all the way to Pasadena to root for the football team at the Rose Bowl), Warner Rice, director of the library and chairman of the English department, James Pollock (civilian adviser to General Clay in Berlin), Professors Eich, Blume, and McEwen and Allan Seager. . . . Michigan is the scene of the Hopwood Literary Awards, the occasion for an annual invasion of the campus by hopeful publishers' representatives, waving contracts in one hand and bottles of Scotch in the other. The prize product of the Awards was Maritta Wolff. Recently, however, pickings have been on the thin side, and the entries have become increasingly salty. Warner Rice told me of the evening he found one of his instructors deeply engrossed in a book. Rice noted that the book was the Kinsey report on "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male." "I didn't know you found that subject so fascinating," joshed Rice. The instructor explained, "It isn't that. I'm just tapering off from the Hopwood Awards."

—BENNETT CERF.

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1951
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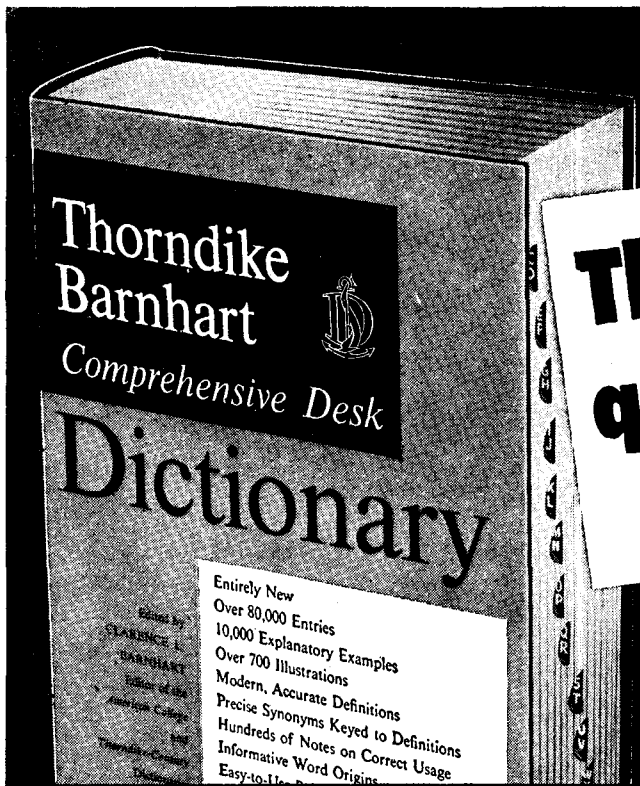

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Fitzgerald: The Double Man

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—*Arni.*

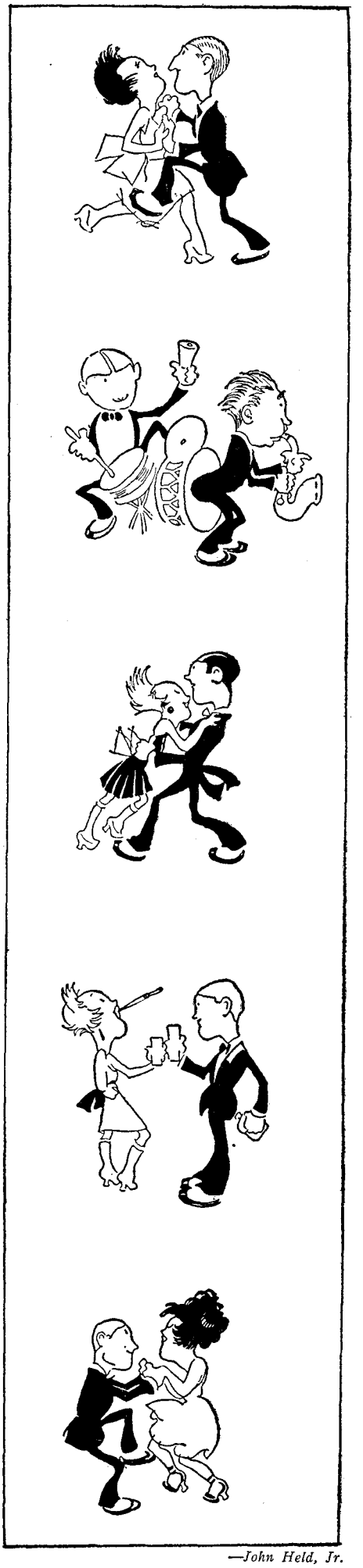
Malcolm Cowley

IN victory and defeat F. Scott Fitzgerald retained a quality that very few writers are able to acquire: a sense of living in history. Manners and morals were changing all through his life, and he set himself the task of recording the changes. They were revealed to him not by statistics or news reports but in terms of living characters, and the characters were repealed by gestures, each appropriate to a certain year. He wrote: "One day in 1926 we"—meaning the members of his generation—"looked down and found we had flabby arms and a fat pot and we couldn't say boop-boop-a-doop to a Sicilian. . . . By 1927 a widespread neurosis began to be evident, faintly signaled, like a nervous beating of the feet, by the popularity of cross-word puzzles. . . . By this time"—also in 1927—"contemporaries of mine had begun to disappear into the dark maw of violence. . . . By 1928 Paris had grown suffocating. With each new shipment of Americans spewed up by the boom the quality fell off, until toward the end there was something sinister about the crazy boatloads."

He tried to find the visible act that revealed a moral quality inherent in a certain moment of time. He was haunted by time, as if he wrote in a room full of clocks and calendars. He made lists by the hundred, including lists of the popular songs, the football players, the top debutantes, the hobbies, and the slang expressions of a given year; he felt that all these names and phrases belonged to the year and helped to reveal its momentary color. "After all," he said in an otherwise undistinguished magazine story, "any given moment has its value; it can be questioned in the light of after-events, but the moment remains. The young prince in velvet gathered in lovely domesticity around the queen amid the hush of rich draperies may presently grow up to be Pedro the Cruel or Charles the Mad, but the moment of beauty was there."

Fitzgerald lived in his great moments and lived in them again when he remembered their drama; but he also stood apart from them and coldly reckoned their causes and their consequences. That is his doubleness or irony, and it is one of his distinguishing marks as a writer. He laughed at himself, applauded, pitied, and punished himself as if "himself" were a younger and rather distant relative given into his care. He stood on the curb and jeered at himself while himself was leading the parade. He was at the same time the hero and his worshipers, the prodigal son and his father, the criminal and his judge.

Perhaps the best statement of this doubleness occurs in the second chapter of "The Great Gatsby." Nick Carraway, the narrator, has been taken to the apartment where the wealthy Tom Buchanan is keeping a mistress. There is a drab party during which



—*John Held, Jr.*

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everyone maunders drunkenly except Nick, who listens drunkenly. "Yet high over the city," Nick remembers, "our line of yellow windows must have contributed their share of human secrecy to the casual watcher in the darkening streets, and I saw him too, looking up and wondering. I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life." In his own copy of "Gatsby," now in the Princeton Library, Fitzgerald made a number of minor corrections. One of them is in the sentences just quoted: instead of "I saw him too" Fitzgerald wrote "I was him too," without observing the stricter rules of grammar. He *was* the observer as well as the participant, and in both roles he was simultaneously enchanted and repelled.

At times during the years from 1935 to 1939 he seemed to be merely self-pitying or boastful, as if one result of his crack-up had been to destroy his gift for standing outside himself; but he recovered the gift in the year before his death. One finds it in "The Last Tycoon" and in the otherwise valueless Pat Hobby stories just as much as in his earlier work. In most of his stories, early and late, it was as if he were describing a big dance to which he had taken the prettiest girl, to the envy of all the other dancers—while at the same time he stood outside the ballroom, a little Midwestern boy with his nose against the glass, wondering how much the tickets cost, and who paid for the music.

But it was not a dance he was watching so much as it was a drama of conflicting manners and aspirations in which he was both the audience and a leading actor. As audience he kept a cold eye on the actor's performance. "I've got a very limited talent," he told me when I went to see him in Baltimore. "I'm a workman of letters, a professional. I know when to write and when to stop writing." It was the maximum of critical detachment, but it was combined with the maximum of immersion in the drama. He said in his notebook and without the least exaggeration, "Taking things hard, from Ginevra to Joe Mank—" mentioning the names of his first unhappy love and of a Hollywood producer who, so he thought, had ruined one of his best scripts: "That's the stamp that goes into my books so that people can read it blind like Braille."

The handle by which he took hold of his characters was their dreams. These in most cases were the commonplace dreams of young men and women living in his own time and belonging to his own social class, but almost always Fitzgerald managed to surround them with an atmosphere of the mysterious and illimitable or of the pitifully doomed. His great scenes were, so to speak, played to music: sometimes the music from a distant ballroom, sometimes that of a phonograph blaring out a German tango, sometimes the wind in the leaves, sometimes the stark music of the heart. When there was no music at least there were pounding rhythms: "The city's quick metropolitan rhythm of love and birth and death that supplied dreams to the unimaginative"; "The rhythm of the week end, with its birth, its planned gaieties, and its announced end"; "New York's flashing, dynamic good looks, its tall man's quickstep." Fitzgerald's dream of his mature years, after he had outgrown the notion of becoming a big man in college, was also set to a sort of music, perhaps that of the "Unfinished Symphony." It was the dream of becoming a great writer, specifically a great novelist who would do for American society in our time what Turgeniev, for example, had done for the old regime in Russia.

—*From "The Far Side of Paradise."*

Scott, with Zelda, 1932: "We couldn't say boop-boop-a-doop to a Sicilian."

IT was not his dream to be a poet, yet that was how he started, and in some ways he remained a poet primarily. He said of himself, "The talent that matures early is usually of the poetic type, which mine was in large part." His favorite author was Keats, not Turgeniev or Flaubert. "I suppose I've read it a hundred times," he said about the "Ode on a Grecian Urn." "About the tenth time I began to know what it was about and caught the chime in it and the exquisite inner mechanics. . . . Knowing these things very young and granted an ear one could scarcely ever afterwards be unable to distinguish between gold and dross in what one read." When his daughter was learning to be a writer he told her, "The only thing that will help you is poetry, which is the most concentrated form of style."

Fitzgerald himself was a poet who never learned some of the elementary rules for writing prose. His grammar was shaky and his spelling was personal; for example he wrote "ect." more often than "etc." and misspelled the name of his friend Monsignor Fay on the dedication page of "This Side of Paradise." In his letters he always misspelled the given names of his first and last loves. He was not a student, for all the books he read, not a theoretician, and perhaps one should flatly say not a thinker. He counted on his friends to do much of his thinking for him; at Princeton it was John Peale Bishop, he said, who "made me see, in the course of a couple of months, the difference between poetry and non-poetry." Twenty years later, at the time of his crack-up, he was forced to re-examine his scale of values and found thinking incredibly difficult; he compared it to "the moving about of great, secret trunks." He was then

(*Continued on page 42*)

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Fiction. *In the world of publishing, the "spring" book season is well under way long before the first crocuses have popped up. No single week this spring is likely to bring a group of books more notable than that reviewed below. James Jones's novel of Regular Army life, "From Here to Eternity," lives up to the extraordinary pre-publication expectations it has aroused. Indeed our reviewer, Ned Calmer, hails it as "a work of genius." Arthur Koestler, one of Europe's greatest living men of letters, in "The Age of Longing" is enhancing his reputation with a terrifying warning about the world into which we are drifting. Mary Jane Ward ("The Snake Pit") offers a troubling portrait of a woman on the eve of forty in "A Little Night Music"; and Fritz Peters ("The World Next Door") presents an honest study of homosexuality in "Finistère."*

The Real Enemy Is Hard to Find

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY. By James Jones. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 861 pp. $4.50.

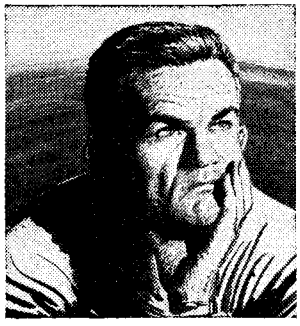
By Ned Calmer

THE ghost of Maxwell E. Perkins is hovering (perhaps a bit uneasily) over the debut of James Jones, a thirty-year-old first novelist who spent five years in the United States Army and then three years more writing a story 860 pages long about what he observed as a soldier. In a postscript Mr. Jones expresses his gratitude to the great Max for believing in him and gives a credit for editing help to Perkins's associates at Scribner's.

The respect seems mutual, for Mr. Jones's publishers declare the appearance of his novel can be compared with the first books of Thomas Wolfe and F. Scott Fitzgerald. That's an introduction that takes a good deal of living up to, but one reaction is already indicated: whatever its critical acclaim on purely literary merit, "From Here to Eternity" is likely to become the most talked-about novel of 1951. Its spectacularly indecent vocabulary assures that in advance. The Book-of-the-Month Club's editorial board, calling it one of the most impressive novels considered in many years, offers it to members as an alternate rather than a regular selection to forewarn that it's a book you might not want to leave lying around. Once that precaution is taken the gentle Max can rest easy. For the non-squeamish adult this is the best picture of Army life ever written by an American, a book of beauty and power despite its unevenness, a book full of the promise of great things to come.

It is the violent saga of some violent men who belonged in that tiny proportion of our population which up to World War II was the U.S. Army, more specifically still a company stationed in Hawaii whose bitter, brawling professional soldiers live out the months leading up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The principal figures are Private Prewitt and Sergeant Warden, and the two women they love in cynical and transient fashion. Warden's affair with his captain's wife is conventional adultery in an exotic setting, but Prewitt's passion for Lorene, née Alma Schmidt, the spoiled goddess of a Honolulu brothel, seems destined to prove the most original love story of the year. By the time the novel reaches its climax in the wild chaos of the Pearl Harbor attack the love affairs are already over. Warden, who has rejected his chance at a commission, sees the company he knew disintegrating, while Prewitt meets death after almost unbelievably sordid, tragic adventures in barrack rooms, bars, and prison stockade.

I wrote "almost" unbelievably because, for all its lurid plot and melodramatic incident, you are likely to follow Prewitt's story with fascination once you are past the first two chapters. You are likely to follow him even though at the back of your mind you may feel you are getting only the darkest and most brutal side of the Army picture, with the overemphasis on sex and vice to be expected from a youthful writer. For what Jones has achieved is the portrait of an unforgettable world, built up with a detail that is nothing short of marvelous. It is all here—the Old Army, all the way back to the Moros in the Philippines, to Villa in Mexico, from KP to dress parade, the gear and tackle of a classic profession. The great canvas sprawls with vivid secondary characters all playing the game of Army politics. But it is Robert E. Lee Prewitt's struggle against the world that dominates



THE AUTHOR: After the many years that went into the making of "From Here to Eternity" James Jones says he now feels like a mother whose son has just turned twenty-one and goes forth to joust the treacherous world with a toothpick. "I can only stand by helplessly and remember how I once dandled his first chapter on my typewriter." He is not sure how he happened to write the book—except that he guesses he didn't know anything else to write about, having enlisted in 1939 at eighteen just after graduation from high school in Robinson, Illinois, where he was born. It was "regular" Army then and his adaptation to the "old soldier's" pattern is reflected succinctly by this notation: "Aptd Cpl 13 May 42 red to Pvt3 Dec 43; Apt Sgt 1 Mar 1 44 red to Pvt 20 May 44." He acknowledges to a burning desire to present a picture of the Regular Army as it was and is—"for a time, until I lost it somewhere in the book, I had an intense bitterness against civilians in general." Stationed in Hawaii, he rode out December 7, 1941, and a year later was sent to Guadalcanal, where after fighting four months he was wounded. Earlier in Hawaii doing part-time work at the University he read voraciously, and it was then that the need to write took hold—like a seizure. Back home in Robinson after the war he launched into three years of steady, grueling writing; he had that boon to writers—friends with whom he lived who kept his morale at the proper pitch through the lonely time. Now he feels that too much attention, probably, is given to authors. He says, "People ought to let authors alone and concentrate on their books. All of this sudden attention bothers me—mainly because I like it and hence am afraid of it." But one surmises that a good Army welterweight boxer who gets up at six A.M. to write, who excels in crafts and skills (liking to spend hours sharpening a knife) will weather the publication of a first novel—especially since he's now started on a second. —K. S.

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the book and gives the novel its deeper significance as social protest.

A hard-drinking fugitive from a childhood in the Kentucky coalfields with a talent for using his fists, Prewitt has bummed over the whole country before he turns up in the Army and develops into a first-rate bugler. When we meet him at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii he is twenty-two years old, embittered at the promotion of a less accomplished bugler by a homosexual officer. The dread "Treatment" finally breaks him; a sentence in the "toughest stockade in the U.S. Army" drives him to his ultimate act of murder. Some time after his release and still unsuspected of the murder Prewitt is shot to death by military police while trying to rejoin his unit at night. Mr. Jones would make us feel the inevitability of Prewitt's end. It all began, he would have us understand, because Prewitt was born on the wrong side of the tracks, because he was brave and proud and refused to surrender his rights as an individual, because he would never compromise in anything. And so he found his way into the Army, still seeking his dream of realizing his true identity, eagerly reaching out to the only illusion of security he knew.

"From Here to Eternity" is filled with the hunger and loneliness, the confusion and despair that are Prewitt's life and longings and his search for that rarest moment when one human could find and touch the soul of another. Prewitt is a fighter who does not know what he is fighting "because the real enemy, the common enemy, was so hard to find since you did not know what it was to look for it and could not see it to get your hands on it, so you fought each other, which was easier. . . ." It is a book full of hatred—for the officer class, for women, for fools and stuffiness and authority, save that which is freely given by a man to his friend. It is also a book full of love—for the comradeship of the helpless, for the company of pain.

The background of Prewitt's experiences is saturated with the class struggle in America and the deeds of its martyrs. In that, as in his style, Jones is like Dreiser. Prewitt, like his creator, is a man of utter honesty. And Jones, like Prewitt, has been there. When we have read him we have been there, too, and have been shaken and chastened by what he has made us feel. This is proof that, in spite of imperfections, "From Here to Eternity" is a work of genius.

Ned Calmer, who conducts the CBS radio program "World News Roundup," is the author of "The Strange Land," a highly regarded novel of World War II.

The Paralysis of Fear

THE AGE OF LONGING. By Arthur Koestler. New York: The Macmillan Co. 362 pp. $3.50.

By Harrison Smith

GEORGE ORWELL'S memorable satirical novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" pictured life in London when a monolithic Communist state had for some years been ruling the world. It had the terrifying power of one of those nightmares from which the sleeper wakes sweating in mental agony. Arthur Koestler's latest novel has the same frightening quality, but the reader does not shake off its effect on his mind readily. He cannot say it is only a nightmare and consequently preposterous, that it could not happen or if it did that the cataclysm is comfortably scheduled for the distant future. The events that occur in "The Age of Longing" lie in that grim borderland just over the horizon, between the morning newspaper and the fateful headlines three or five years hence. Your reason tells you that it *could* happen in Paris, that it is already happening in just this way in Western Europe.

What is happening in Mr. Koestler's novel is that thoughtful men in Paris are being paralyzed by fear of the unknown and that the voices of the intellectuals are destroying the people's will to resist. He expresses this in two widely separated paragraphs. In one a famous Russian writer suddenly announces his apostasy. He says, "The main reason why men endure tyranny is fear. They conclude that if they could liberate themselves from fear, tyranny would collapse and freedom follow. The objects of fear are physical and mental suffering. . . ."

Later, a fugitive intellectual liberal whose life has been spent in a debasing fear of retaliation declares, "With regard to positive ideas, the improvement of artistic taste, and so on the intelligentsia has only a small, slow influence over the masses. But in a negative way, as a corroding, destructive agent, its influence is enormous. . . ."

This theme is illustrated in his novel. Its principal characters are Hydie, an emotional and unbalanced American girl whose father is a power in the American Embassy in Paris, and Fedka Nikitin, a cultural ambassador from Moscow, risen from the peasantry, educated and indoctrinated into complete submission to the Marxist faith in the triumph of Communism over the world. Secretly he is engaged in accumulating the names of men and women in the literary and cultural world who will be liquidated when France is conquered by revolution or war. It is a brilliant and convincing characterization of a man who believes in the monstrous theory that whatever the hierarchy in the Kremlin orders must be morally and intellectually right.

On the surface a love affair between Hydie and this monster from another world would seem to be impossible, but as Koestler develops his story it becomes logical, even inevitable. The American girl's mother had been an alcoholic who rejected her; she had attended a Catholic school in England where she had mildly fallen in love with a nun and then had suffered the loss of her faith. She had married briefly and unhappily. After she had gone to Paris to live with her intelligent and harassed father she found herself incapable of any emotional response or fulfillment. She fled from one night club, *bistro*, or party to another in the hope of finding love or some base for her emotions and ideas.

When Hydie met the Russian cultural ambassador she was drawn to him because his mental and physical strength appealed to her amorously and because he was the only man she knew who believed with all his mind and heart in a cause and an idea. How monstrous both that cause and that idea were she did not discover until her love affair ended in a sudden physical and moral revulsion, of which the actual cause was a personal assault on what remained of her dignity as a human being, in a scene that involved his proof to her that human beings are motivated as are the dogs in Professor Pavlov's experiments. Later, Hydie attempts to kill him. He is wounded and sent back to Moscow to whatever grim destiny his masters have in store for him.

At the end of the novel the fate of Paris and the rest of the world is in doubt. The final scene is satire or comedy as the funeral cortège of old Monsieur Anatol, the academician, creeps to the cemetery through mobs screaming for the revolution.

It is fitting that when the characters approach the grave an ominous cloud should be moving toward the city, and as the sirens begin to wail no one knows whether it means the last judgment or another air-raid exercise. In short, "The Age of Longing" is at once complex, powerful, and terrifying. If we, the readers, were intended by Mr. Koestler to shudder at his fantasy, so distant from our hopes and yet so close at hand, and if he hoped that this novel might elicit the will to resist enslavement, he has succeeded in his aims.

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Father & Daughter

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC. By Mary Jane Ward. New York: Random House. 244 pp. $3.

By JOSEPHINE LAWRENCE

ALL WOMEN will probably agree that the fortieth birthday is a difficult milestone. It is just possible that our readiness so to testify contributes to the general debacle, but it cannot be denied that the compulsion to look back, inevitably with regret, assumes pathological aspects at the close of the third decade. Fortunately, at this stage many women also come face to face with reality, put away childish things, and effect a compromise between what might have been and what must be.

Elizabeth Chapin chose the night before her fortieth birthday to indulge in retrospect; no more bitter comment can be made upon her decision than the banal "better late than never." For Elizabeth at thirty-nine was unmarried, a teacher of piano in her home town's music conservatory. Her father had been dead for three years, most of the family money—the fortune had been her mother's—was gone. Adoring the memory of her father, Elizabeth considered her mother's reaction to widowhood little short of shocking, for Jeanette Chapin acted almost relieved. There are, you perceive, discords in "A Little Night Music."

At forty even the least eventful life has accumulated memories it might be better not to have stored. In Elizabeth's case a distinct pattern is washed clear by the anguish and tumult that sweeps across her mind; she is forced to see that this pattern, repeated with deadly precision, has set an acid seal upon her every bright hope, every normal friendship, every chance to love, down through the years.

The pattern is the subtle, diabolical design worked out by the father she has always worshiped. Ralph Chapin, outwardly charming, witty, urbane, possessed a serpent's tongue, and his favorite poison was ridicule. His beautiful daughter fed his vanity; he kept her playing tennis with him, chose her clothes, and killed off her suitors with his deadly verbal venom. That his wife knew him thoroughly and realized that the dressmaker from whom he insisted she buy her gowns was his mistress annoyed him not at all. He was satisfied to control his daughter, and his success in defeating his wife's efforts to free Elizabeth from his coils merely added to his devilish enjoyment. He cherished the delusion that by keeping fit he could remain youthful indefinitely; he died after winning a set of tennis from Elizabeth when she was thirty-seven and he past sixty. And he had to be dead three years before his daughter would admit, even to herself, that she had allowed him to win. Elizabeth's final and complete escape from him was accomplished when she realized that he had never loved her, "had not even liked her."

Mary Jane Ward handles her materials skilfully, integrating the family relationships and background with Elizabeth's introspection so deftly that her characters breathe naturally. As sometimes happens, one of these, assigned a minor part, steps right into the limelight and leaves the reader hungry for more. Aunt Ellie, whose tragic story might easily have been repeated in Elizabeth (Jeanette Chapin understood and feared the possibility) dominates the last chapter in the book with a charm and insouciance that will be envied by the responsible and sane.

—Merrill Chase—Town House.

Mary Jane Ward—"there are discords."

—Marian Morehouse.

Fritz Peters—"love is what matters."

Murder of Innocence

FINISTERE. By Fritz Peters. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 307 pp. $3.

By GORE VIDAL

THE first third of this remarkable novel is a somewhat dispiriting account of the lonely twelfth and thirteenth years in the life of Matthew Cameron, whose parents have just been divorced. Mr. Peters unfortunately tends to lecture us, like a man with a magic lantern showing various slides with appropriate commentary: Matthew and his mother leaving for Europe after the divorce; Scott, a younger friend of his parents and the boy's ideal of an older brother; the French school to which Matthew is sent; his mother's marriage to a Frenchman. The style, which is naturalistic, seems better suited to straight narrative than to the long expositions the author gives us in sentences burdened with those familiar, untidy words and phrases: "transference," "inextricably bound," "relationship," "complete withdrawal." But then, quite suddenly, this pedestrian aspect is splendidly transformed.

One autumn day at the school Matthew, while swimming in the Seine, nearly drowned. The young athletic director Michel Garnier saved his life, rescuing not only the body but the boy's drowning heart. Matthew had never loved anyone before and Michel, though he had known the life of the bars and dark alleys, the cheap hotel rooms and the anonymous men, had never loved either or been loved. When summer came Michel went with Matthew to Brittany, to the French land's end, Finistère, where Matthew's mother and stepfather were staying; here the idyll continued, unsuspected and unchanged. Everyone was aware though of some vast change in Matthew, a sudden flowering, for at sixteen he had become a man, a complete human being, less the guilt most men feel when they love.

From this emotional height descent was inevitable: the world intruded. In Paris for a few weeks with Michel, Matthew saw his father for the first time in years, and Michel, fearing the older man's influence, became jealous, made scenes, even in a sadistic frenzy arranged a tour of the homosexual world of Paris for Matthew. Shocked and bewildered, the boy endured it all, even Scott's discovery of the affair and his Scout Manual advice—a discovery which reunited the lovers. But then back in Brittany the end came swiftly. The stepfather attacked Matthew, who, revolted and terrified,

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turned blindly on Michel, shattering the dream for good. When the mother finally understood what had happened and in her turn deserted the son Matthew left the inn one night and went beyond the land's end to the sea, back to the impersonal, to the constant mother.

At this moment in our social history it is difficult for most American authors to write a novel about a homosexual affair without making either a tract or an apologia. Mr. Peters has done neither. Instead, he has kept resolutely in focus his great theme: the corruption and the murder of innocence. The love, not its object or its nature, is what matters. The fact that it was homosexual in this case merely serves to dramatize the situation more sharply than an ordinary affair might have done; for, though our superstitious world has condemned much about love in general, has spun a web of legal statutes about the body, a web of fear and malice about the heart, it has in the case of homosexualism been furiously irrational. There is consequently a unique impact in Mr. Peters's selection of a man-lover for the youth whose fate it was to know the full terror of the world in a single bitter season, a knowledge other men come to slowly, by degrees. Mr. Peters has created a fine and passionate novel. It is almost as if two of those idealized youths in Plato's "Symposium" had for one brilliant moment come alive again on a sunlit beach near the land's end of Europe.

Gore Vidal is author of "The City and the Pillar," "The Season for Comfort," and "Dark Green, Bright Red."

Committee Meeting in Yorkshire

QUORUM. By Phyllis Bentley. New York: The Macmillan Co. 309 *pp.* $3.

By WALTER HAVIGHURST

THE TOWN of Ashworth with its steep streets, its mill chimneys, the solid hum of thousands of spindles, and the windy Yorkshire hills rolling away in the distance—here is the familiar scene of Phyllis Bentley's sound and substantial novels. But in this novel rows of new pre-fabs line the upper streets and a maze of new State regulations surrounds the textile industry. The time is a September day in 1949, and old Thomas Armitage, owner of the Highshaw Mills, feels a stranger in his native place.

To show the new forces at work in this West Riding setting Miss Bentley has written "Quorum." It is a cross-section novel, bringing together eight carefully differentiated and representative persons who are holding a committee meeting to plan a historical pageant of the Yorkshire textile industry.

As the committee assembles the novel cuts back to follow each person through the events of the day and to sketch in his longer past. So we learn that cynical Sir Charles Considine is planning to wrest control of the Highshaw Mills from benevolent old Thomas Armitage. Young Roddie Bairstow, nagged by a paltry debt, is thinking that life was better in the African campaign. Bored and restless Elizabeth Marrison is a designer both by profession and by nature, and the dowdy science teacher Deborah Sykes has remained warm-hearted despite a tragic past. A hearty old trade-union man who has worked in the mills from the age of ten, a sullen and rankling Communist, and a wide-eyed young hairdresser make up the rest of the committee.

Here are the new types, created by the new England, alongside the old who have belonged to Yorkshire for a hundred years. The older types have the author's sympathy, and they carry most conviction. Highly implausible committee members are the wily Considine and smoldering Elizabeth Marrison, who are inevitably paired off at the story's end.

"A committee," says old Thomas Armitage, "is a wonderful revealer of character." A committee meeting to discuss a local pageant is also a humdrum affair. Eight lives here build up to a committee meeting—to a lengthy reading of minutes and a discussion of costumes, stage properties, and the price of admission. Though certain new relationships are cemented before the evening is over, the committee meeting lacks sufficient moment to provide a turning point or even a focal point in all these lives. It is as though the travelers whose separate destinies brought them at the same moment to the bridge of San Luis Rey found the bridge under repair and lingered for an hour together, with some interchange of sympathy and suspicion, before proceeding on their ways.

Fiction Notes

INTO THIN AIR. By Warren Beck. Knopf. $3. We have learned to expect from Mr. Beck awareness of delicate emotions in his characters, expressed in a fitting prose that is rich with shades and half-shades of meaning, and we are not disappointed. There are, of course, the Jamesian and Conradian touches, but the author has something to add of his own. Out of seemingly flimsy materials he builds up a story of the pathos of loneliness and of things remembered while waiting for death.

Ralph Kempner is an old man when the story starts. He is a bachelor, an invalid, with a not very kind nurse waiting upon him. Day after day he sits at an upstairs window watching workmen tearing down a neighboring dwelling, even as his own life is ebbing away. That house contains a host of pleasant memories for him, of tragic memories, too; for here until her death had lived Mrs. Johnston, who was old enough to be his mother but ageless in her cheerfulness and acceptance of life, a condition she had communicated to him in their regular meetings at her house.

Kempner in his early years had foiled his mother's plans for a marriage with Eleanor, to whom he was wholly indifferent; he preferred to live his easygoing bachelor's life—that is, until he met Elissa, Mrs. Johnston's married daughter-in-law. They had had an affair, and had Ralph spoken the right word in time the woman he loved might have come away with him. But something interfered, and then it was too late. Then there were his chats with Mrs. Johnston after Elissa died, and slowly they develop into confessionals, as the story and comprehension of the past grow. These flashbacks come naturally and are not rudely brought in, as in a great deal of our fiction today. There is a philosophy, too, in the story, which deals with the rights and wrongs of infidelity, with nostalgic regret, and with personal integrity insofar as it is related to enduring love, the compensations of which are there in spite of the failure. —JOHN COURNOS.

12½ PLYMOUTH STREET. By Ruth Park. Houghton Mifflin. $3. It was Kipling who said,

We fail to look
  Where the snail and the slug lie
For Psyche's birth . . .

Mrs. Park has looked there and seen more than the snail and the slug—bedbugs, in fact, and lice, moldy oranges, discarded cabbage leaves, the vomit of drunks, and all the other

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refuse of the crowded slums. These happen to be in Australia where black men and white and brown and yellow live in a mass like maggots separated only by sagging, dingy walls.

Yet out of this welter Psyche emerges in the person of Dolour Darcy, the "kid sister" in Mrs. Park's first book, "Harp In The South." This story is mainly of Dolour's growing up, of the flowering of her innocence in a sordid environment. The young girl is drawn with tenderness and insight, and her gradual maturing is deftly handled.

All the others are here—Mumma who is a devout Irish Catholic but who is not above telling Himself how badly He runs things; Hughie, Mumma's drunkard husband, fighting, blustering and crawling home for comfort as before; Roie, the gentle older sister; and her husband, Charlie, who has native blood in him.

It is their child, the natural product of the slums and well on her way to delinquency at six, who awakens Dolour's sense of responsibility, and it is Charlie, wild with grief after Roie's death, who shows Dolour that love even in the midst of bedbugs and garbage can be clean and trustworthy.

Perhaps it is a mistake to write a sequel about a group whose lives have so much of a sameness, day after day. Even the small, sharp dramas of poverty cannot make them endlessly appealing. I imagine that it is for this reason that, though Dolour's story makes good enough reading, this book lacks some of the tenderness and appeal of the first.

—Christine Noble Govan.

DANGER FROM DEER. By Vicki Baum. Doubleday. $3. The selfish woman who destroys everything she touches has become a stereotype of modern fiction. Ann Ambros, the heroine of Vicki Baum's latest novel, is such a Balzacian monster that she occupies a niche of her own. She is almost too wicked to be true.

Mrs. Ambros is introduced to us as a frail, gentle old woman traveling with her stepdaughter on a crowded, eastbound train. A friend, whom she adroitly maneuvers out of his compartment, spots the worm in the apple and provides the book's title. Ann reminds him of a sign in an English park, warning of danger from deer. Aware of the danger is Joy Ambros, who rouses from her unhappy lethargy to push her mother off the train, after a bitter quarrel.

While struggling to remain alive through a long, rainy night Ann sees her life in retrospect. Like a black widow spider she had poisoned everyone within her orbit. From childhood she had used her beauty and delicacy

(*Continued on page* 32)

World War II.

The half-dozen books reviewed here add important bits to the still incomplete story of the war of 1939-1945. With Germany today a nation down but certainly not out, such volumes as Felix Gilbert's "Hitler Directs His War," Desmond Young's "Rommel, the Desert Fox," Hans Speidel's "Invasion 1944," and Otto Skorzeny's "Skorzeny's Secret Missions" hold significance for the future as well as historical fascination. But thoughtful readers will remember that none of them is definitive, pondering such contradictions as the accounts of Rommel's end given in the Young and Speidel volumes. "Breaking the Bismarcks Barrier" is another link in S. E. Morison's lively official history of the U.S. Navy's war; it covers "the forgotten war" in the Pacific that Navymen insist was "the real war." A useful guide to the whole conflict is H. C. (Strategicus) O'Neill's "Short History of the Second World War."

Where the Road to Tokyo Began

BREAKING THE BISMARCKS BARRIER: 22 July 1942—May 1944. By Samuel Eliot Morison. Vol. VI of A History of United States Naval Operations in World War II. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 463 pp. $6.

By C. Vann Woodward

THE new volume in the Morison history of Naval operations in World War II portrays the least-known phase of the Pacific conflict. Falling between the actions around Guadalcanal that ended early in 1943 and the huge Central Pacific campaigns of 1944, the Papuan-Solomons-Bismarck war was overshadowed not only by more spectacular sea fighting but by contemporary successes in the European theatre. The South Pacific and Southwest Pacific commands believed they were forgotten by the public and neglected by the joint chiefs of staff. To a man, however, they were convinced that theirs was "the real war." There was much to be said for their claim.

The road to Tokyo was by no means clearly marked at the beginning of 1943. We had deprived Japan of the initiative in the Pacific, but it was doubtful what we could do to exploit the advantage. It was at least perfectly plain that if General MacArthur was to begin his "return" to the Philippines up the back of New Guinea the barrier of the Bismarck Archipelago had to be broken. Captain Morison describes that barrier as "a gigantic fish weir" — its wing stretching northward through Truk and the Marianas to Japan and its circular trap wound around stout posts in New Ireland, New Guinea, New Britain, and the Admiralty Islands. Outer bastions were flung to the eastward along the Solomons. At the center stood the great base at Rabaul on the eastern end of New Britain. With its five airfields, commodious harbor, and elaborate defenses Rabaul seemed impregnable. This book is the story of how Rabaul was first neutralized and then by-passed and left to "wither on the vine."

The job was one of the toughest and most tedious of the war. It took a year and a half and every sort of fighting that occurred anywhere in World War II. Primarily it was amphibious warfare, climbing from one steaming beachhead to the next up the Papuan Peninsula and the Solomons chain. Here we learned the enemy's strength and his weakness and developed the by-passing strategy that shortened the war. There were also land fighting in the equatorial jungles of New Guinea and Bougainville, strategic bombing missions, shore bombardment missions, carrier air strikes, and a daily round of air-against-ship actions, air-against-ground troops, air-against-air dogfights, and motor torpedo boats against the field.

Naval veterans and Morison fans will read with most interest the terse

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—*From "Art in the Armed Forces."*

"Prisoners, Bizerte," by Mitchell Jamieson.

and realistic descriptions of the Naval battles of Kula Gulf, Kolombangara, Vella Gulf, Empress Augusta Bay, and Cape St. George. Brief and bloody slugging matches, all but one of them destroyer actions, these engagements were fought around the Solomon Islands against the "Tokyo Express." Since all of them took place at night it was rare that either side knew what happened to the other. Anyone who attempted to get a clear account of these actions during the war will be familiar with the frustrations involved. Morison's careful search of Japanese and Allied records proves that each side consistently overestimated the damage inflicted on the other, that American commanders badly underestimated Japanese weapons, particularly the "long-lance" torpedo, and were blindly overconfident of their own gadgets, particularly radar. The champion optimist of the whole theatre, however, was General George C. Kenney of the Fifth Air Force, who still sticks to his overestimates.

Never bound by the gold-lace formality traditional among Naval historians, Captain Morison grows progressively more informal in style. Frequent lapses into the present tense and liberal use of locker-room language and nicknames may annoy some readers, but the historian saw much of the action he describes and his military slang is authentic.

C. Vann Woodward is professor of American history at Johns Hopkins University. A lieutenant in the U. S. Naval Reserve, he is the author of "The Battle of Leyte Gulf."

Götterdämmerung in Capsule

HITLER DIRECTS HIS WAR: The Secret Records of his Daily Military Conferences. Selected, translated, and annotated by Felix Gilbert. New York: Oxford University Press. 187 *pp.* $3.25.

By Telford Taylor

"DID ANYTHING important come in, Zeitzler?" asked Hitler.

"Nothing special, my Fuehrer," replied the German chief of staff.

It was past midnight, but the Fuehrer was deep in conference with Zeitzler and Field Marshal von Kluge, hastily summoned from his Army Group Headquarters on the Eastern Front. Mussolini had fallen the day before, and there was hell to pay. In reply to a question from Hitler Kluge admitted that he had so far heard only the German radio report that Mussolini had resigned because of illness.

"Well, the radio announcement is of course not true," remarked Hitler, who went on to describe to Kluge how the Duce had been arrested and dismissed. "With the exception of Jews and riffraff who are causing a commotion in Rome, there is no one behind the new regime . . . but at the moment they are in, and it is absolutely imperative for us to act. . . . I can't take action unless I move additional units from the East to the West . . . we must make plans for reorganizing your line. Are these your maps?" And for the next half-hour the unhappy Kluge was cross-examined and browbeaten and then sent off to brood on how to hold his positions if "a few panzer and a few infantry divisions" were taken away from him. After Kluge's departure Himmler, Goering, Doenitz, Rommel, and others joined the group around the Fuehrer. A fresh report from the German Ambassador in Rome precipitated harangues against Badoglio by Hitler and Goering.

Such is the stuff of this invaluable little book, which brings back to life Hitler and his military entourage at the Russian front. No other source I have seen captures so authentically and vividly the morbid, demonic spirit of Hitler's headquarters—"half monastery and half concentration camp," as Jodl described it from the witness box at Nuremburg.

For these are the relics of verbatim shorthand transcripts of Hitler's conferences with his generals, salvaged from the ashes to which S. S. troops reduced the bulk of them shortly before the end of the war. For their discovery and preservation we are indebted to the imagination and resourcefulness of George Allen, then a sergeant in the Military Intelligence Service, who contributes a foreword describing the circumstances and the methods by which the charred fragments were reconstructed. Felix Gilbert, professor at Bryn Mawr, has done a superb job of selection and annotation, and his introductory comments are both penetrating and well written.

The earliest conferences here recorded took place in December 1942, the last in March 1945. Unhappily, nothing from the closing days of deathmadness in the Berlin bunker was found. Only 800 of an estimated 200,000 pages could be resurrected, and from these Professor Gilbert has culled only the best. Since the fifteen conferences from which he includes material were spread through twice as many months inevitably the result is episodic.

Rommel was already in retreat and the Stalingrad crisis was mounting at the time of the earliest conferences. Thus they cover only the years of German withdrawal and defeat. And they go far to explain what for me has always been the greatest riddle of the Third Reich. How Hitler achieved power and how the Wehrmacht overran Europe is no longer much of a mystery. But how the Fuehrer was able to maintain his iron grip on Germany throughout the last two and most terrible years of the war, when disaster after disaster overtook the nation, is a problem which the historians have not yet satisfactorily explored.

So far as the generals are concerned, however, these records give us a clue. Uneducated and untrained as he was, Hitler dominated his headquarters both intellectually and emotionally. Some fifty field marshals and generals and staff officers accompany the Fuehrer in the pages of this book. They report, they discuss, they advise, and they even disagree with Hitler's proposals. Sometimes their recommendations prevail—but they are all wooden men. None of them manifests any vision or ability to cope with world affairs in the large. None of them ever says anything perceptive.

"Himmler knows his police," declares Hitler in his very first observation here. "He makes them use shady methods, and so they become dependent on him." Truly, here was one whose genius it was to find the worst in every man and wring it out of him.

Telford Taylor is a member of the New York law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton, and Garrison. At the Nuremberg trials he served as U. S. chief of counsel with rank of brigadier general.

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A General's Dualism & Destiny

ROMMEL, THE DESERT FOX. By Desmond Young. New York: Harper & Bros. 264 pp. $3.50.

By H. A. DeWeerd

NO GERMAN general in World War II won more attention and admiration in England than Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. English praise for him increased with each new defeat he inflicted on their Eighth Army in the Western Desert. Because little was known about him outside Germany legends grew up around Rommel as lush as those about Hindenburg in World War I. Brigadier Desmond Young, who served in the Eighth Army, set out after the war to tell the "true story" behind the Rommel legend. He collected material on his subject, interviewed the field marshal's son and widow, and discussed the war in North Africa with Rommel's colleagues, Ravenstein, Esebeck, Bayerlein, and Aldinger. He also had a series of conferences with General Hans Speidel, Rommel's chief of staff in France. Some of Rommel's papers recently released by his family appeared too late to be fully exploited, although excerpts are printed in the appendix. With the aid of these sources generally friendly to Rommel Brigadier Young has written a fascinating book, one which has been a best seller in England.

In describing the early life and professional career of Rommel the author lays low the myth of Rommel's early connection with the Nazi Party. Far from being the Nazi bully boy that some writers have claimed he was, Rommel never left the Reichswehr. His closest association with the party was a brief tour as military instructor of the Hitler *Jugend*. Rommel did not make a special study of the terrain of the Western Desert before the war, nor was the Afrika Korps given special training in desert warfare. Rommel was simply one of many divisional commanders who distinguished themselves during the French campaign of 1940. The Afrika Korps consisted of regular Wehrmacht units.

The best chapters in this book describe the chivalrous and tough fighting Rommel carried out in North Africa. He was a soldier's general, treating prisoners with exemplary fairness and demanding as much of his officers as they expected of their men. By commanding in person and by employing his massed armor in close coordination with his anti-tank weapons he was able to defeat Cunningham, Ritchie, and Auchinleck without enjoying the air supremacy deemed necessary for success in other theatres. As these pages show, Rommel had a genius for tactical improvisation, a flair for personal leadership, and remarkable recuperative powers. Sometimes, as in the case of the Bir Hacheim-Tobruk operation in 1942, he was able to wrest victory out of an apparent defeat.

In the long view of history, however, credit for these considerable achievements will be limited by a fuller evaluation of Eighth Army leadership and equipment in those days. According to Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger, a distinguished New Zealand officer who fought through these campaigns, Eighth Army leadership and methods would have made any good German tank commander look wonderful. As he saw it there was little thought of coordinating armor and infantry, no proper reconnaissance, and no adequate briefing of units in the Eighth Army until Montgomery arrived.

Rommel's fortunes declined after he had driven the Eighth Army to the Alamein position in the summer of 1942. He was in Germany recovering from an illness when Montgomery launched his offensive at El Alamein in October. Rommel rose from his sickbed and flew to Africa but could not stem the tide of disaster which engulfed his army. Though he conducted the long retreat to Tunisia with great skill, this was a shattering experience for him.

A few weeks before El Alamein he had predicted that the Afrika Korps would soon capture Cairo. Rommel's explanation for this remarkable example of faulty judgment was that Hitler had shown him the pilot models for a new tank and a new mortar and that these projected weapons convinced him that all would be well in North Africa. Brigadier Young does not mention General von Thoma's criticism of Rommel's failure to have selected a better site for a defensive position. He repeats General Cramer's complaint that lack of fuel doomed the Afrika Korps to defeat at El Alamein. This excuse did not satisfy Hitler; he asked how Rommel could possibly have withdrawn so many trucks and tanks without fuel. Hitler seems to have regarded Rommel as a fair-weather fighter who became completely pessimistic in the face of defeat.

These pages convey the impression that Rommel retained considerable respect for Hitler as a courageous war leader up to 1943. Then he began to learn about Nazi barbarism and concentration camps. That Rommel was so late in becoming aware of Hitler's depravity is attributed to the fact that he dealt with OKW only through General Schmundt, a man he admired very much. As Schmundt explained it to Rommel, Hitler was a good man at heart but surrounded by rascals. By accepting the highest decorations and the rank of field marshal Rommel became identified with a regime he later came to despise.

What Brigadier Young calls Rommel's "pitiless destiny" arose from a curious dualism in the field marshal's mind. Rommel did not follow the example of Rundstedt, who never wav-

—From the book.

Rommel (with Captain Aldinger)—"a soldier's general."

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ered in his military loyalty to Hitler. He did not accept the proposal of the resistance leaders in the Army that Hitler must be assassinated before the war could be ended. With a lack of realism that is hard to comprehend, Rommel in 1944 thought that Hitler could be arrested by an armored division and tried by a German court. The issue on which Rommel was prepared to act, however, was not the barbarism of the Nazi regime but the military folly of Hitler's intervention in the battle of Normandy. Rommel wanted peace with the Western powers after Hitler's overthrow but continued war with Russia. He was willing to have his name put forth as head of the Wehrmacht in the new Government. Apparently to Rommel's mind, as well as to the minds of his family and surviving colleagues, all this was something less than treason. Hitler thought otherwise and gave Rommel, whose connection with the plot of July 20, 1944, was concealed for a time by his severe wounds suffered on July 17, the choice of suicide or public condemnation as a traitor.

Rommel chose suicide, and his family went through the ordeal of a funeral with full military honors conducted by the regime which had just taken his life. The hoax was continued to the very last days of the war when Frau Rommel was given her choice of several models for a monument.

H. A. DeWeerd, a professor at the University of Missouri, served as historian of the Operations of the War Department General Staff during World War II. He is the author of "Great Soldiers of World War II," "World War II: A Concise History."

They Wanted Hitler Killed

INVASION 1944. *By Hans Speidel. Chicago: Henry Regnery.* 176 *pp.* $2.75.

By Harry C. Butcher

LIEUTENANT General Hans Speidel, the author of this book, has bobbed up in the news recently in connection with the consultations taking place at Bonn between the American occupation authorities and certain high-ranking German officers concerning the possible formation of German forces to resist the Russians. General Speidel was chief of staff to General Rommel when Rommel had the assignment from Hitler to stop the Allied invasion. Rommel was not permitted by Hitler to follow his own strategy of maneuver—to pull away from Allied forces if necessary—because Hitler insisted repeatedly that every German stand in his place and fight to the last. The result was costly to the Germans, and the outcome is history.

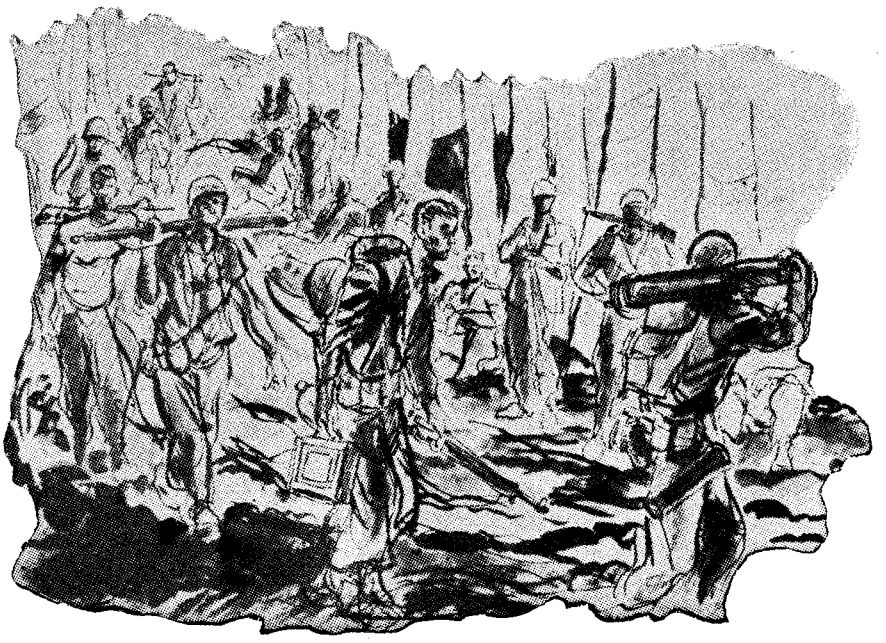
The attempted defense against General Eisenhower's landings, the breakout from the lodgment area, the spectacular end-runs of Patton, the capture of Paris, and the advance to the east form the background for an intriguing tale of conspiracy in which both Rommel and Speidel were involved. For their efforts to overthrow Hitler before all was lost for Germany Rommel, according to Speidel, ultimately was killed by Hitler's S.S. men and Speidel himself relieved and thrown in prison.

In the spring of 1944 there were many Germans in high places who plainly foresaw Germany's doom and the senseless losses that were being suffered because Hitler personally gave fantastic military commands. These Germans needed a name such as Rommel's which would develop and hold a following, once Hitler was overthrown. Rommel had quarreled with Hitler about strategy. Rommel was the military hero of Germany and became deeply involved in the conspiracy. However, Rommel wanted Hitler arrested and tried by a proper court—the leading conspirators wanted Hitler killed.

On July 20, 1944, Hitler miraculously escaped the effects of a bomb planted in a brief case. His henchmen immediately purged many of the leaders, and Rommel, too, was under suspicion. An Allied airman, busy strafing anything that moved on the roads near the lodgment area, saw a solitary staff car and shot it up. Rommel was in that car. (Allied headquarters, through its sources of information in France, soon had a report of this important incident.) Rommel was badly wounded and was hospitalized near Paris until he recovered sufficiently to be moved to his home in Germany to convalesce. There, according to Speidel, he was visited by S.S. officers, who by ruse took Rommel in their car, drove away with him, and shot him.

Speidel pays tribute to Eisenhower's leadership ability, to the fighting quality of the British and Americans, and particularly to the equipment they were provided. The Germans had not conceived that the Allies could bring their own harbors with them and in their high command were confused into believing there would be a second major landing in the Dieppe area. Consequently the German Fifteenth Army was held north of the Seine, though it was badly needed by Rommel's Seventh Army south of the Seine. Speidel writes that the Allied advance across France was too methodical and not sufficiently daring—otherwise the war could have been finished in 1944. As is generally known, both Field Marshal Montgomery and General Patton sought permission to race toward Berlin in the fall of 1944, but General Eisenhower would not permit them to make the attempt. He feared that Germany still had too many armored units and too much fighting power generally to get one or even two spearheads into Berlin and that these dashing columns could be cut off and trapped. What Eisenhower feared might happen in

(*Continued on page* 34)



—*From "The Old Breed."*

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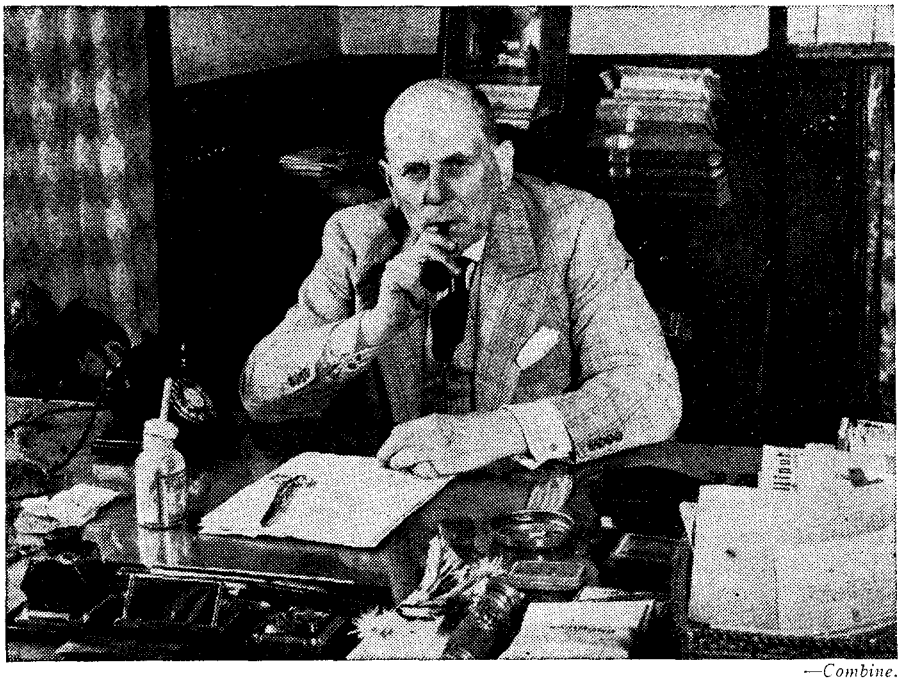

—*Combine.*

James Agate—"the passion of the true critic."

Agate & His Nine Egos

JACQUES BARZUN

"WHO IS James Agate?" asked the eminent critic Sir Edmund Gosse some twenty years ago. Given the circumstances the question was inexcusable—it was just one of Gosse's ways of being eminent—for at that time both men were on the staff of the London *Sunday Times*, Gosse as chief book reviewer, Agate as chief drama critic.

But American readers today may be excused for asking the same question, since the fame of dramatic critics, especially the recently dead, does not carry across the ocean. Students of the theatre everywhere are no doubt familiar with Agate's biography of Rachel the actress and with the collections he made of his own and other critics' writings. He himself was well known to his American colleagues, notably George Jean Nathan and John Mason Brown, but with the exception of a few articles here and there—in newspapers and anthologies—he may be said to remain, for our insular purposes, unpublished and unread.

In time his best writing is bound to emerge, but there would be small reason to discuss him now if during the last fifteen years of his life, that is to say from 1932 to 1947, he had not produced an extraordinary piece of work, unique in form, though not in kind, which is a storehouse of varied pleasures for the general educated reader. The work I refer to is the massive autobiographic diary called "Ego." Of its nine volumes the American reader will shortly be offered the last two under one cover.*

Do not throw up your hands in well-feigned horror: nine volumes! I know that life is short and one's own life demonstrably shorter than Agate's seems to be. But in the lively chronicle I am recommending you do not hear the drone of a single voice; you are not treated to one set of subjects, all intellectual, but range freely through space and time and human activity. Food and the footlights and the screen take their turn with golf and motorcars and music. Literature and choice gossip alternate with bilingual puns and portraits of celebrities—live, dead, dying. Dip in anywhere:

> Sacheverell Sitwell has written a book about Mozart in which he said silly things about Wagner. Ernest Newman ripped the bowels out of Sacheverell, who wrote of Wagner's "vulgar, tweed-clad tunes." Osbert tried to defend his brother, and I had not the courage of my true conviction, which is that both brothers are artists who enjoy pretending to be asses.

Or if you prefer dialogue:

> Am afraid I was rude to H. G. Wells last night. It was at the Café Royal and Wells, sitting at a nearby table, shouted in his loudest whisper that he had just come from "The Devil's Disciple," and how much better it was than any film.
>
> *J. A.:* I don't agree. "Northwest Passage" isn't a work of art. But it brings your heart into your mouth and keeps it there.
>
> *H. G.:* Ah well, I don't know what a work of art is.
>
> *J. A.:* Oh, yes you do. But never mind that. Why praise one kind of good thing at the expense of another kind of good thing?
>
> *H. G.:* I stand corrected.

And again there are anecdotes. We see Mrs. Patrick Campbell, for instance, listening to a bore in full spate about the marvelous social organization of the ants—their police force and their army. Mrs. Pat Campbell leans forward and with grave voice and mien interrupts: "No navy, I suppose?" Another time Agate compliments the charming, elderly Lady Tree on the appearance of her hair, which she gaily acknowledges: "How perfectly sweet of you to call it mine!" Or again, he is in a restaurant with an aging beauty, and as she reads the menu at arm's length a catty friend suggests that she should really reconcile herself to wearing glasses. The retort flashes back: "There's nothing wrong with my eyes; it's my arm that isn't long enough!"

No collection of samples will exhaust the variety of genres and moods which Agate makes use of. One can only say that nine volumes of this ideal bedside reading are none too many. "Ego" is a kind of vast *roman à clef* of which the key is not hidden.

In the midst of his populous circle, actual and spiritual, sits James Agate, a watchful host, or rather an unceremonious master of ceremonies, who takes care not to bore his reader-guest by too long a course of any one subject.

When it comes to literature and the arts Agate invariably displays the passion of the true critic with its attendant zest for intellectual debate; he always knows what the other side is saying. He knows moreover how to temper insistence by a masterly use of quotation. We hear him repeatedly on "Macbeth," about which he is truly admirable, but Hazlitt follows as prop or amendment. Agate propounds the greatness of Bernhardt and Irving, but the opposition speaks through Shaw or Max Beerbohm. At other times he peppers his pot with the ad-

(*Continued on page* 40)

* *THE LATER EGO.* By James Agate. To be published March 30 by Crown Publishers.

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Hope Without Reticence

TO CELEBRATE its seventy-fifth anniversary the American Library Association is fostering a wide discussion, "The Heritage of the United States in Times of Crisis." It is badly needed in this critical year in which Western European civilization, our passionate concern for the fundamental rights of human beings, and the revolutionary concept of the United Nations are all on trial. They are links in the same chain which if it is strong enough may hold back the march of Russian Communist imperialism. We now have the "Voice of America," recently augmented in volume and resources; the information and ideas that flow steadily across the Atlantic through the medium of books, magazines, and the press; and the news and speeches emanating from Lake Success. But they are not enough to stem the tide.

It is only too easy for European intellectuals to attack "the Voice," with its constant emphasis on the immortal words of our great emancipators and the constant stressing of American wealth, security, and opportunity, which must have sour and bitter overtones to the listener in Germany or France. The material selected from our newspapers by British and European editors has always highlighted our worst traits—our civic violence, the evidences of racial prejudice, the intemperate and foolish statements of some of our legislators. Beginning with the Civil War America has never had a good press in Europe; and the temptation to exploit the mixed emotions aroused by our prosperity, immunity from attack, and our enforced leadership of the Western world is almost irresistible to foreign magazine writers and columnists, and to the cynical and fearful intelligentsia, whom Arthur Koestler satirizes in his latest novel.

Somehow there must be an inspired synthesis of American propaganda (there is no use in blinking at the word), which must emanate from professionals who know the European mentality, from our educational institutions and intellectual centers, and from powerful institutions like the American Library Association, whose program for this year should be known abroad. And especially there must be a campaign to arouse abroad a renewed enthusiasm for the United Nations, not as an instrument of American or Atlantic nations' policy but as the one medium which can enforce the common will of all its peoples for peace, individual freedom, and political liberty.

In a recent public address Walter H. C. Laves, former deputy director general of UNESCO, said, "The necessary preoccupation of most European countries with immediate postwar problems of reconstruction and rehabilitation has meant that they have done little or nothing to bring about the necessary change in outlook that is needed for constructive living under an international, as distinct from an essentially national, way of life. The bulk of their populations has been educated under curricula and textbooks that take no account of the political revolution achieved through the creation of the United Nations. The orientation of education is still national; the outlook it encourages is provincial rather than worldwide. Unless far more European youths and adults have this outlook soon the maintenance of the United Nations system may well be considered in doubt."

There can be little doubt that Americans must lead in the re-education of the European countries which are open to democratic influence, though this is a statement which would have a harsh sound to foreign ears. It is necessary for us to continue to spend and spend without hope of any apparent return or without any attempt to use our political and economic power to blackmail other nations into agreement with us. We have the money and the will to attempt to bring about a revolution in European thought. Our ability to do so and to train the men who can persuade without bullying, who can argue without any assumption of righteousness or superiority of wealth will long remain in doubt.

But there are many mediums through which it can be brought about: the establishment of free libraries where few or none exist, an increased effort to exchange scholars, students, and artists with the countries of the United Nations, and the constant flow of the products of American farms and factories wherever they are most needed—all obvious aims which in some measure are already in operation. It will require ingenuity and subtlety, though we are not known as a subtle people when we travel in our tens of thousands abroad. We must also express our constant belief in the United Nations and our hope, which must have no limits or reticences, that whatever may happen as the result of our past errors the future belongs not to the tyrannies of the East but to the enlightenment and freedom of the Western world.

—H. S.

For Outstanding Service

NORMAN COUSINS has received the 1951 Tuition Plan Award for outstanding service to education. It was given in recognition of his work as chairman of the Connecticut Fact Finding Commission on Education. As Mr. Cousins is now in India the award was accepted on his behalf by Chester Bowles, former Governor of Connecticut. In a statement read by Mr. Bowles Mr. Cousins drew attention to the contribution of the commission's other members and said that he was accepting the award on their behalf as well as his.

Acknowledgement

By Mary Ballard Duryee

MARIANNE MOORE, your letter is here.
Your delicate writing (I think you should know it)
Is just like the writing—fine and clear—
Of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, poet.

Two letters now lie under my lock
Which fame will ransom. In equal hostage
I hold the one from the auction block
And the one that traveled for three cents postage.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Mind of Asia

SIR: I must congratulate you for bringing out "America and the Mind of Europe" [*SRL* Jan. 13] at such a critical time. I do, however, want to suggest that the same thing is needed with regard to Asia.

BAIDYA N. VARMA.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: SRL *is planning a special issue on "America and the Mind of Asia," scheduled for publication August* 4, 1951.

Sinclair Lewis

SIR: Harrison Smith's clear and orderly article on Sinclair Lewis [*SRL* Jan. 27] makes it plain that Lewis suffered during his adult life because the artist in him did not come to satisfying terms with society in general.

It is cause for all readers to mourn that a mind like Sinclair Lewis's should be burdened by human frictions. It has been and may still be thought that art and maladjustment go together. Perhaps this assumption should be more thoroughly examined in the light of present-day educational methods, in which the ability to live peacefully in society is often considered at least as important as the various kinds of knowledge, such as skills, creativeness, or encyclopedic or specialized knowledge of facts. It has been said repeatedly that no one can be taught to write. Writers probably knew how to write in the first grade. What they must learn is what to write and how to organize it. It is debatable whether anyone can teach them these things. Perhaps it would be useful, then, to do away with courses in writing and substitute courses in living. Perhaps this would prevent a pattern in which a world of human beings is able to enjoy from a distance Sinclair Lewis's brilliance, but Sinclair Lewis is not able to enjoy a world of human beings.

SALLY SEDGWICK.

Sherman, Texas.

SIR: What an excellent article on Red Lewis! I loved him as Harrison Smith did. Mr. Smith has caught the truth about him fully and translated it into a rightful tenderness.

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: It is a tender and lovely piece Harrison Smith did about Red Lewis.

MORRIS L. ERNST.

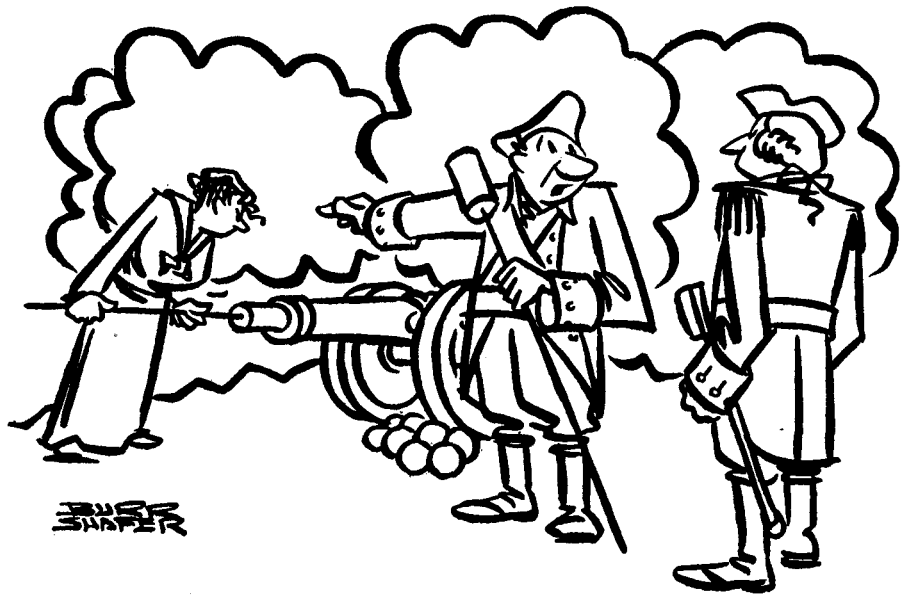
New York, N. Y.

No Time for Weakness

SIR: In his editorial "Getting Off the Pyramid" [*SRL* Dec. 23] Oscar Hammerstein states clearly and convincingly the critical need for an international federation. We must not be discouraged by the threat of another global conflict. So much depends upon the prevention of future wars that it would be tragic for the world-government movement to be weakened by an international situation which appears virtually hopeless.

LOIS RATHBUN.

Monrovia, Calif.



THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"That Mollie Pitcher took my cannon away from me!"

Omitted by H. W. Wilson

SIR: The article on the H. W. Wilson Company, by Jack Pollack [*SRL* Feb. 3], was of special interest to me, for I have used the various publications of the Wilson Company for many years and have found them most helpful. Mr. Pollack has nothing but praise, and in the main I agree. However, there are a number of important omissions in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* which detract from its value. *McCall's* is omitted, although *Ladies Home Journal* and *Woman's Home Companion* are included; *This Week* is omitted, although *New York Times Magazine* is listed, and *Redbook* is omitted, although *American Magazine* is included.

FANNIE SIMON,
Associate Editor and Librarian,
McCall's.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: The article on H. W. Wilson was well written and a fine tribute to Mr. Wilson. I do wish, however, that Mr. Pollack had expanded his statement that "authors are both awed and exasperated by the *Readers' Guide* methods." I would like to add that many librarians feel that way also. Our research can never feel quite complete knowing that several excellent magazines are not indexed, hence many fine articles are all but lost. Magazines of such prominence as *Look* and *McCall's*, for example, are not indexed. Both carry articles comparable to and surpassing many of the articles indexed in *Readers' Guide*. The method of selection of magazines to be indexed appears rather antiquated. I have been in the library field for about fifteen years and in that length of time I have received only one ballot from the H. W. Wilson Company requesting my selection of new magazines to be indexed. I know of many librarians who have never received such a ballot. Such glaring omissions should be corrected and a better method of selection adopted. I am sure the subscribers would be only too glad to pay the additional service charges.

WILLIAM S. DOWNEY,
Librarian,
Look.

New York, N. Y.

Kean in "Lear"

SIR: John Mason Brown in "Lear's Kingdom" [*SRL* Jan. 20], agrees with Charles Lamb in "the sense of diminishment which every responsive reader of 'King Lear' is fated to experience when he encounters the play behind the footlights."

According to Richard Henry Dana, it depends on who is behind the footlights. The following quotations will serve the point. In his celebrated essay on "Kean's Acting" Dana writes:

> It has been so common a saying that Lear is the most difficult of characters to personate, that we had taken it for granted no man could play it so as to satisfy us. Perhaps it is the hardest to represent. Yet the part which has generally been supposed the most difficult, the insanity of Lear, is scarcely more so than that of the choleric old king. Inefficient rage is almost always ridiculous; and an old man with a broken-down body and a mind falling in pieces from the violence of its uncontrolled passions is in constant danger of exciting along with our pity a feeling of contempt. It is a chance matter to which we may be most moved. And this it is which

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makes the opening of "Lear" so difficult. . . . It has been said that Lear is a study for one who would make himself acquainted with the workings of an insane mind. And it is hardly less true that the acting of Kean was an embodying of these workings.

DONALD G. MCLAREN.

Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

"The Heel of Elohim"

"SIR: Why in heaven's name did you assign Hyatt Howe Waggoner's book "The Heel of Elohim" to Louis Untermeyer for review? I esteem Mr. Untermeyer greatly for his massive labors as an anthologist, but surely anyone familiar with his writings knows that he is so much the child of an age of shallow humanism that he could not be counted upon to understand the purpose of Professor Waggoner's book.

"The Heel of Elohim" is a study of how the major American poets have reacted to (or against) the scientism and materialism of the twentieth century. No one reading Mr. Untermeyer's review would guess that one of the main points made by Waggoner is that the poets almost without exception have gone counter to the "spirit of the times" by insisting that values are as real as anything the scientist examines in his test tube. Nor did Mr. Untermeyer show any comprehension of Waggoner's statement that the poets, mavericks that they are, are peculiarly significant because they insist on responding to life and reality as a whole, instead of accepting a convenient simplification.

Well, it's not my intention to write a second review of the book. But please—in the future when a critical book of equal depth comes along will you have it reviewed by someone temperamentally and philosophically capable of understanding what in the dickens the author is getting at?

CHAD WALSH.

Beloit, Wisc.

SIR: Even though I may be "the child of an age of shallow humanism" (whatever that means) I think my limitations are not so great that I cannot understand the purpose of H. H. Waggoner's book "The Heel of Elohim." My objection to the work was twofold: (1) practically everything said had been said before; (2) it had been said better. My main criticism was not that the writing was "different" or "difficult" but that it was doctrinaire and dull.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Giving H. G. His Due

SIR: Harrison Smith's review of the H. G. Wells biography by Antonina Vallentin [*SRL* Jan. 13] provided the most effective possible "Rebuttal on H. G. Wells." I wish everyone who has seen Wells's stature minimized since his death would read it. What satisfaction to know that this country's leading literary publication retains the perspective on his achievements which Wells deserves!

RICHARD H. COSTA.

Utica, N. Y.

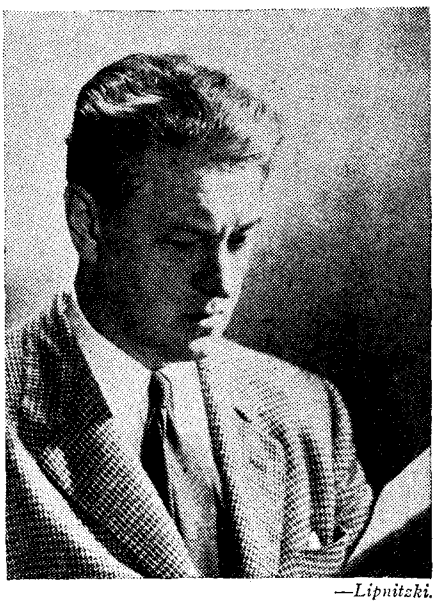
Music. *Twenty years ago the phrase "modern music" implied something cacophonous, difficult to comprehend, and of doubtful longevity. Since then "modern music" has ceased to appear so uncompromisingly modern. Its harmonies seem tamer, its idiom more acceptable, its chances for survival quite hopeful. "Modern music" can even lay claim today to its own classics. We are as confident of the durability of Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Vaughan Williams as the listeners of 1851 were of Chopin, Schumann, and Mendelssohn. It is about these particular contemporary masters that the two featured books this week are concerned. Nicolas Nabokov's "Old Friends and New Music" gives revealing personal glimpses of the two eminent Russians; Hubert Foss's "Ralph Vaughan Williams" allies the dean of English composers with the main stream of English poetry.*

Some Creative Russians

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW MUSIC. By Nicolas Nabokov. 294 pp. Boston: Little, Brown Co. $3.50.

By CARLETON SPRAGUE SMITH

NICOLAS NABOKOV was brought up in pre-Revolutionary Russia, emigrated to Paris in the early 1920's, and a decade later came to these shores. After World War II he was again in Europe, this time in Germany with the Music Control Branch of the Information Control Division of the United States Military Government. From this varied career comes a series of essays that together make a very entertaining volume. The most interesting parts of the book are the chapters devoted to four outstanding Russians of this century: Diaghilev, Koussevitzky, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev. Nabokov modestly keeps himself in the background, not easy for a composer writing about music. In fact, one misses autobiographical details, particularly when one remembers the dashing figure he cut abroad as a young man.



—Lipnitzki.

Nicolas Nabokov—"tellingly shrewd."

Nicolas Nabokov combines unusual perception with psychological insight and a charming sense of humor. His book is concerned primarily with Russians, their esthetic theories and creative abilities, and he has a talent for summing up the characters of his actors. For instance, Stravinsky is described as "the most famous *fauve* of Western music before World War I" and "the greatest living investigator of instruments as individuals"; Prokofiev strikes him as "a kind of big baby who must tell the truth on all occasions, and for him to conceal his personal opinions is the most difficult thing in the world." Nabokov speaks of the much-debated Shostakovich and adds that it is as difficult to describe his music "as to describe the form and color of an oyster, not because this music by any means is complicated or 'inscrutable in its profundity' (as Russian criticism used to put it) but simply because it is shapeless in style and form and impersonal in color."

There is an intimate picture of Koussevitzky which shows the champion of contemporary music in characteristic vein. We feel as if we had been present at their meetings. He also explains that strange impresario Diaghilev giving a nice balance between his brilliance and shortcomings. Nabokov's judgments are tellingly shrewd:

> To Diaghilev a contemporary composer existed only by virtue of his having written music for the Ballet Russe. His peculiar egocentricity and megalomania made it seem that a composer who had not written for

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his ballet company was a composer whom he did not want, either because he considered his music bad or because the composer had not come around to be given a commission. Even if this were not the case, he wanted it always to appear as if he had "discovered" his composer, which in the case of Hindemith (who by then was already a famous man) seemed particularly comical.

I should like to have heard Nabokov's opinions on composers of the New World and some of the non-Russian Europeans whom he has known; however, in fairness it must be said that this was not contemplated in these essays.

The author has been extremely observing regarding music and politics, and there is an excellent chapter on Music Under the Generals. The scene is Berlin 1945-1946, the actors American and Russian brass-hats. The Americans while innocent are sincere; the Russians, as usual, evasive. There is a splendid finish when the head of the office of propaganda of the Soviet Military urges the author to return—"A man with a name like Nabokov should be in Russia toiling for the new life, the future"—but is told politely, "I prefer the climate of New York."

Altogether a delightful book, though the index is somewhat carelessly made. For instance, George Antheil and Miaskovsky, both mentioned in the text, are missing from it. To read "Old Friends and New Music" is like having an invigorating conversation with a friend over an aperitif.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 401

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 401 will be found in the next issue.

RCAHMAH BHOHEMDDP

FHBCOA GIMG HKLMDCGP

SICTI RHMGI TNQWDHGHA.

—RE. AMQLHD XNIOANO

Answer to Crypt No. 400

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.
—JONATHAN SWIFT.

For He Is an Englishman

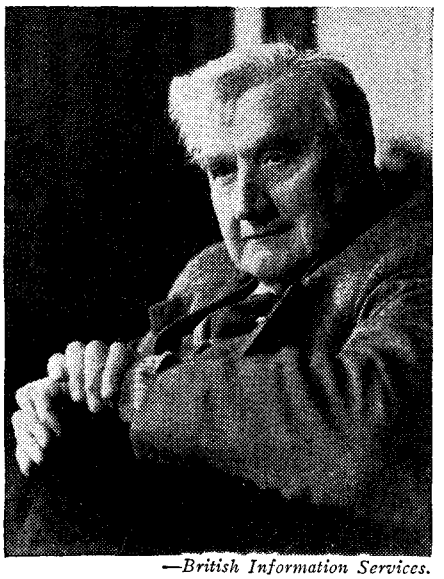
RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. By Hubert Foss. New York: Oxford University Press. 219 *pp.* $3.50.

By CECIL SMITH

A NEW study of the music and the career of Ralph Vaughan Williams hardly ranks as a momentous addition to world knowledge about music. English composers worth writing about are in exceedingly short supply, and the dean of British national composers has long since received a thorough going-over at the hands of his compatriots. Scarcely a measure of his generous output has been left unanalyzed, and scarcely a local or historical connotation has gone unidentified. Along musicological lines there is not much Mr. Foss can say that has not been said half a dozen times before.

Yet this is an unusual and inviting book. Mr. Foss has revived the dying art of writing piquantly and personally about musical topics in a manner that partakes of the vivacity and grace of the informal essayist. Unlike the authors of most music books, he inhabits an intellectual world in which poetry and fiction, lore and tradition are the lively associates of music. A piece of music does not pose an analytical exercise for him; it is a vivid experience to be captured by the imagination and recreated for the reader in terms of shifting metaphors and fancies. A seeker after essences rather than data, he is willing to leave to pedants the task of isolating and cataloguing the technical devices Vaughan Williams uses in the mechanics of composing. Setting his sights higher he attempts "a study of the great man's mind," against the historic panorama of English literature and art of which this "Miltonic figure" has increasingly become a significant part in the past half-century.

Mr. Foss locates Vaughan Williams in the English tradition by identifying him with four poets. ("I have chosen poets for comparison," he writes, "rather than musicians, because our English poetry is supreme in world history beyond denial. Our English music stopped short too soon. The splendid fame and achievement of our Elizabethan composers . . . Vaughan Williams bids fair to bring back their Golden Age to us.") Like Milton's poetry, Mr. Foss finds in Vaughan Williams's music "a strong feeling for the English language—its flexibilities, its obstinacy—so like our national character." There are also "the widely imaginative, almost wild drawings of Blake's designs and



—British Information Services.

Vaughan Williams—"Miltonic figure."

Blake's Biblical imagery, Blake's quick poetry and remote mysticism." Vaughan Williams is like Thomas Hardy: "Neither will dogmatize: both seek a new and particular truth each time." In his music one can find not only the "dramatic range" of Shakespeare, but Shakespeare's "close touch with humanity, his understanding sympathy with us all, his kindly but incisive humor."

Granting Mr. Foss the right to a bit of hyperbole, he does succeed in defining Vaughan Williams's unique place in English music. Though others have tried, no other modern composer has penetrated to so deep a substratum of typically English feeling and thinking—to the extent that Vaughan Williams's music falls on deaf ears on the European continent and has not attained a very loyal following in the United States. His music lacks the Teutonic orthodoxy that makes Elgar's "Enigma Variations" acceptable everywhere Brahms is admired; nor does it have the sheer virtuosity and surface glitter of Benjamin Britten's eminently salable scores. To understand Vaughan Williams's music one must understand the English character; to like it one must accept the most deeply ingrained English assumptions about the values of living, of nature, and of art.

Mr. Foss inquires brilliantly into the "Englishry" of Vaughan Williams in terms of six "aspects of the English way of life": the English character and mind, the English language, the English landscape, English folk song, an earlier English music, and the English Church. "Vaughan Williams is essentially an open-air composer," he asserts. "At his most mystical he is a

(*Continued on page* 30)

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Seeing Things

MR. DULCIMER AGAIN

"LET ME come to your room to say good-by," Conrad had whispered. Mrs. Adaile, as he had called her during the enchanted summer of their first meeting twenty years ago in Rouen when he was seventeen, had been compelled to say no. "My maid" was her explanation, and it was sufficient. "Come and say good-by to *me*, then." That was what Mrs. Adaile had done, not without some planning. He went on ahead to wait for the moment when she would be free of her friends. To pass the time, he read "Le Marquis de Priola," puffed at cigarettes, and finally tossed the book aside. Thereafter for nearly half an hour he watched the door. Then it opened, and Mrs. Adaile stood on the threshold.

Although she paused, awaiting the expected words of welcome, these were not heard. Conrad had fallen asleep. He was snoring faintly. Mrs. Adaile's first, and very natural, reaction was anger. But she was blessed with a wise sense of humor and was soon smiling at the tragic absurdity of having ever hoped to recapture what had been. She found a pencil and noiselessly tore the title page from "Le Marquis de Priola." Having scribbled a note she disappeared. When Conrad was awakened in the morning, the first thing he saw was that title page pinned to his bed-curtain. On it was written, *"Dreamer!* Good-by. There is no way back to Rouen."

Sitting before Shepard Traube's revival of "The Green Bay Tree"* (or more accurately, sitting through its first three scenes, for this was all that I could take) I was forced to think back to Leonard Merrick. Unlike his Conrad I was not in quest of my youth, but I was a wanderer in the past; a person hoping that the memory of an experience, cherished for eighteen years, would be matched by what the present offered.

I say this because over the seasons, whenever theatre-lovers have met and passed the time by exchanging recollections, this original performance of "The Green Bay Tree" has sooner or later, and usually sooner, crept into the conversation as a standard of excellence. As directed by Jed Harris and acted by James Dale, Laurence Olivier, and Leo G. Carroll, it was a miracle of skill and good taste. It said things without saying them. Its implications were incessant, its subtleties endless. To crown it all, Robert Edmond Jones had designed for its London scenes in Mr. Dulcimer's flat a setting so right and yet so restrained in its pushing of beauty to the point of exquisiteness and hence making it a spokesman for decadence that, more than being a background, this interior became a major character.

The late Mordaunt Shairp's play could readily have gone wrong in production. Its theme, though absorbing, was not exactly pleasant. If "The Captive" was known in French as "La Prisonnière," "The Green Bay Tree" might have had as its Parisian title "Le Prisonnier." Its subject was the losing battle fought by a girl to free the young man to whom she was engaged from the destroying domination of the middle-aged sybarite who was his foster-father.

The sybarite in question was Mr. Dulcimer, a rich votary of all things esthetic, who had devoted himself to unfitting for life the boy he had bought from a drunken father. His handling of Julian was in the nature of a conspiracy. Everything he had done for him out of abnormal affection and in the name of beauty was part of his plan to rob Julian of his self-reliance and guarantee his dependence.

—Talbot-Giles.

Joseph Schildkraut—"tulips so wilted."

Genuine as its merits were, Mr. Shairp's drama was not without its shortcomings. Beatrice Lillie in her ballad was explicit in stating what was at the bottom of her garden; Mr. Shairp in his script was not. In having Julian's reformed father dispose of Mr. Dulcimer by reaching for a revolver, it stooped to easy melodramatics. It was a play, too, which, as in the scene in Camden Town, became dullish when Mr. Dulcimer was not around. Moreover, Mr. Shairp's writing of the girl was as shadowy as his characterization of his men was incisive. Certainly he did not strengthen his struggle by having his heroine a veterinary and thus condemning Julian, regardless of his choice, to going to the dogs. At its best, however, "The Green Bay Tree" was admirable theatre. Its treatment of an unusual theme was perceptive and engrossing. And in performance, due to Mr. Harris and his fellow workers, it seemed even better written than it was.

MR. HARRIS, so brilliant in meeting the demands of such hard-boiled melodramas as "Broadway" and "The Front Page" and so lyric in capturing the tender simplicity of "Our Town," never demonstrated his range and skill as a director more persuasively than in his staging of "The Green Bay Tree." Although he must have been tempted to underscore if not to overstress his points, he resisted the temptation at every turn. His judgment was unerring, his taste impeccable. He permitted Mr. Shairp's subject-matter to raise its own echoes. He did not dodge the ugly implications of the theme. Yet, without ever stating them directly, he went far beyond Mr. Shairp in suggesting them. He created an atmosphere of preciousness in which the awareness of evil was as oppressive as the scent of flowers at a funeral.

Mr. Dale's "Dulcie" was the epitome of the perfectionist corrupted by his own worship of perfection. He was an imperious hedonist, a jealous shrew in esthete's clothing, whose tastes were satiny but whose will was iron. He fed, leech-like, on beauty, always taking, never contributing. Leech-like too, he fastened upon the will and personality of Julian, draining him of his self-reliance and weakening his stamina. He was no obvious Osric. But he was a creature who had been tainted rather than improved by his refinement. It was not surprising

**THE GREEN BAY TREE, a revival of Mordaunt Shairp's play. Directed by Shepard Traube. Settings by Raymond Sovey. Presented by Mr. Traube. With Joseph Schildkraut, Denholm Elliott, Anne Crawford, Francis Compton, and Mercer McLeod. At the John Golden Theatre, New York City. Opened February 1, 1951.*

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that needlepoint was a pastime at which he excelled. Flowers were for him more than a hobby. They were a give-away. If he did not trust his butler, Trump, to fix the tulips, it was because he did not feel Trump was a "tulip type." Beyond question Mr. Dale's Dulcie was. He was unforgettable when, properly gloved, he turned the simple act of arranging flowers into a sinister ritual.

Mr. Olivier, very curly-haired and juvenile in those days, was a spoiled though masculine Julian. He was a charming and gay young man. Yet he was so undermined by the dilettantism Mr. Dulcimer had thrust upon him that at the evening's end it seemed inevitable he should call for gloves and flowers and surrender to the sorry fate of becoming another Mr. Dulcimer. Mr. Carroll's Trump was no less memorable. Far more than being that suave automaton, the routine stage butler, he was an important member of a strange household. His eyes were beyond surprise, his silences spoke volumes. He converted a glance, a lifted eyebrow, a smile, or a bow into eloquent dialogue. His very obsequiousness was cynical.

I SHOULD, of course, be discussing the new production of "The Green Bay Tree" rather than indulging in recollections of this magical performance of eighteen years ago. But for me the present revival, instead of supplanting such memories, brought them back to life. Indeed, it so quickened them that that is why I found myself heading for home after the first three scenes, eager to reread the play and think back to it as it had once been done without being distracted by what was or was not now being done to it.

Although usually a fairly patient sitter, I wanted to be off almost as soon as the curtain rose. For the minute I saw Raymond Sovey's setting, with its tan walls, magenta curtains, and yellow couches, I knew that the Mr. Dulcimer who had once lived surrounded by the refinements of Mr. Jones's living room had fallen upon hard times. He was no longer one of those shadowy males who resent the glare of electricity and delight in the softness of candlelight. He had misplaced his taste and with it an important key to his character. Other disillusionments were soon to follow. The first of these came when Joseph Schildkraut, as Mr. Dulcimer, sat down to arrange some iris, roses, and white tulips so wilted and pathetic that they looked as if Trump had stolen them from a cemetery. Had Trump dared to confront Mr. Dale with such posies, he would have been

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given his notice, pronto. Moreover, Mr. Dale's Dulcie would have known how to display even such flowers to their best advantage, whereas Mr. Schildkraut jammed them into vases as if he were filling an umbrella stand.

I hate to be ungrateful to Mr. Traube. His enthralling production of "Angel Street" was skilful enough to put all playgoers in his debt. I only wish his revival of "The Green Bay Tree" could claim the same distinction. Mr. Schildkraut, no doubt, is an adequate enough Dulcie by stock company standards. Denholm Elliott, so excellent as those modern white-tied Dromios in "Ring Round the Moon," plays a Julian who is any agreeable and personable young man. Anne Crawford struggles, even as Jill Esmond did, with the lady dog doctor and probably does as well as can be expected. Mercer McLeod, as the reformed drunkard and religious fanatic who is Julian's father, is far better than the late O. P. Heggie was years ago. With a little more direction he could, in fact, be excellent. But Francis Compton's Trump, unlike Mr. Carroll's, is just any grave and chalky-faced tray-bearer such as is summoned by a bell, year in and year out, in all supposedly upper-class plays.

THERE is no reason, of course, why Mr. Traube should attempt to duplicate Mr. Harris's staging of "The Green Bay Tree." Plays are open to any number of interpretations. But the odd (indeed, for me the disquieting) aspect of Mr. Traube's revival of Mr. Shairp's drama is that he seems to have brought it to the stage without interpreting it at all. The implications are gone, the overtones are stilled, and the spell is broken. If I surrendered to the impulse to leave early, it was because I suspected all the performers had said everything they had to say within the first three scenes. What had been delicate, fascinating, and perfect in the original production had been robbed of the nuances which made it so. A gardenia, so to speak, had been turned into goldenrod.

Those around me did not seem to share my opinion. Being younger or seeing the play for the first time, they appeared contented with what they were getting. The plot interested them. The performances won their approval. They were not faced, as I was, with the sad problem of trying to find a road back to a theatrical Rouen. My chief, my only pleasure lay in thinking back to "The Green Bay Tree" as it had once flourished. I do thank Mr. Traube for reviving these memories.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

SRL Goes to the Movies

THE LADIES, GOD BLESS 'EM

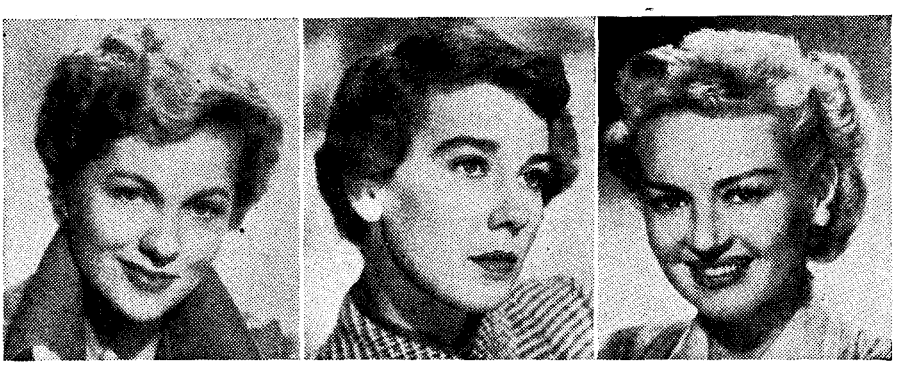
NOBLE ladies, managing ladies, long-suffering ladies—but always and especially beautiful ladies—guide the destinies of their less gifted mates in this week's decidedly mixed package of pictures. They all seem to emphasize what so many films have been suggesting recently, that the better half is indeed better morally, mentally, spiritually, as well as of course physically. Discreetly, without ever tipping their hands, the girls gently but efficiently propel their heroes along the proper path to rectitude or glory. Where would we all be, these movies ask rhetorically, without our womenfolk?

In "September Affair" (Paramount) the answer is a simple one: Joseph Cotten would have been drowned at sea. But since he invited Joan Fontaine, a perfect stranger, on a sightseeing tour through Naples they both missed the plane that took the plunge and decide to go on with their newfound autumnal romance in Capri and Florence when the newspapers list them as dead. But Cotten is a married man, and soon conscience and his wife both catch up with them in their palatial Florentine love nest. Even then Cotten would just as soon let things ride. It is Miss Fontaine who makes the right decision for the two of them, taking up again her abandoned concert career and leaving him alone with his memories—and Jessica Tandy.

All of this is told tenderly, romantically, somewhat anemically against the magnificent backgrounds that Italy provided. While the courtship is pleasant and gay, the two stars keep their extra-marital relations sufficiently refined for the censors, and Cotten seems still virtually spotless when Jessica Tandy welcomes him home with shiny-eyed eagerness. That grand French actress Françoise Rosay does little more than voice her objections to the whole affair from time to time while aiding it throughout—further evidence of her extreme ability, since she does manage to make this weird duality credible. Jessica Tandy, the long-suffering wife, has more difficulty with her even less plausible lines. Unbilled but pleasantest of all in the film are those nostalgic interludes when Walter Huston sings again, through phonograph recordings, his famous "September Song."

Coldly handsome Betsy Drake is the little manager in "The Second Woman" (United Artists), a mystery melodrama which the ad writers have hopefully compared to such suspenseful items as "Laura" and "Spellbound." A certified public accountant, Betsy figures the odds on the string of bad luck that has been hounding Robert Young and concludes that it must be more than pure coincidence. Since these mishaps embrace in rapid succession the shattering of his favorite *objet d'art*, his favorite horse breaking a leg, his favorite pastel fading away, the poisoning of his favorite dog and rosebush, and finally his house burning to the ground Miss Drake has every reason to be annoyed when Young protests that he still can't see it. "It's just my rotten luck," he insists. So Betsy takes upon her slim shoulders the burden of digging up corroborative evidence. Within the next hour or so she has unearthed enough to bring about a denouement that might conceivably have surprised even the writers of this film themselves. But with the slow pace and heavy writing there is little in "The Second Woman" to make one want to try and outguess our heroine.

And finally there is Betty Grable in "Call Me Mister" (Twentieth Century-Fox). Betty proves to be the champion manager of them all, keeping in line the ardent Dan Dailey with



Joan Fontaine, Betsy Drake, Betty Grable—"without ever tipping their hands."

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one hand and putting on a G.I. show that out-Rockefellers Radio City with the other. Betty is an Army entertainer charged with slapping together a little something for the boys in Kyoto in postwar Japan. Dan Dailey, her estranged husband, goes AWOL from his outfit to work with her. The love duets and dances that they rehearse throughout the film merely punctuate the long-range quarrel that proceeds between them until the final close-up.

Obviously, aside from the title, one skit, and a couple of songs, all of this bears little relation to the excellent Broadway revue of a couple of seasons ago. The Fox version of "Call Me Mister" is essentially a vehicle for the pulchritudinous Miss Grable, and neither script nor camera overlooked a single angle that might help accentuate her enduring young charms—which makes "Call Me Mister" perfect for the Grable fans. Dan Dailey dances easily, Danny Thomas is fleetingly funny in a skit or two, and the numerous dance numbers, directed by veteran Busby Berkeley, are vigorously and imaginatively staged. But actually it was the vocal arrangement of Harold J. Rome's title tune, played as accompaniment to the introductory credits, that proved the most exciting thing about "Call Me Mister" for this reviewer. Everything that followed seemed anticlimactic.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.

SRL Recommends

The Sound of Fury: Townspeople, inflamed by circulation-hungry headlines, lynch impoverished man sucked into crime, together with psychopathic killer. Gripping picture of mob violence, if somewhat unconvincingly motivated. [*SRL* Feb. 3.]

The Steel Helmet: Despite familiar "characters" and story line, a compelling quickie about the war in Korea. [*SRL* Feb. 3.]

Ways of Love: Recipient of the film critics' award for the year's best foreign picture, this packaged trio of short movies by Pagnol, Renoir, and Rossellini is distinguished by superb direction, camera work, and performances. [*SRL* Jan. 27.]

The Halls of Montezuma: Filmed in good but not too glorious Technicolor. Shots of actual Marine-Navy maneuvers laced with taut performances into overpowering climax. [*SRL* Jan. 20.]

Born Yesterday: Billie Dawn gropes hilariously through ABC's of democracy, with considerable private enterprise. [*SRL* Jan. 6.]

Breakthrough: Exploits of the infantry-battalion level at St. Lô. Realistically presented — within formula strictures. [*SRL* Dec. 9.]

Mad Wednesday: Harold Lloyd comes back in a film so funny you may hurt yourself with belly laughs. [*SRL* Nov. 4.]

TV and Radio

CONTINUOUS CREATION ACCORDING TO HOYLE

THE BRITISH Broadcasting Corporation's uncompromisingly "cultural" Third Programme presented in 1950 a series of half-hour talks on the nature of the universe given by Fred Hoyle, fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and lecturer in mathematics in the University of Cambridge. Mr. Hoyle is one of the brighter stars in a new constellation of younger mathematical astronomers who have re-examined the astrophysical concepts of the 1920's and 1930's and suggested novel hypotheses to solve the immemorial riddle of our universe's origin and destiny.

The New Cosmology, as it is being called, theorizes that "the universe was not created in 'one big bang' in the remote past, but that it is continually being created and will go on being created in the infinite future." Mr. Hoyle's advancement of this challenging proposal in his BBC talks aroused "considerable comment and controversy abroad."

Public interest was so widespread that the directors of the BBC decided to re-broadcast the Hoyle talks on England's "lower-brow" Home Service. The popular chain reaction did not stop there. Its radiation crossed the Atlantic Ocean; and last December *Harper's Magazine* began to publish a five-article condensation of Mr. Hoyle's lectures. The talks will also be incorporated into a book to be published by Harper & Brothers sometime in April.

On Sunday, February 4, New York City's municipally-owned radio station, WNYC, undertook to broadcast transcriptions of Mr. Hoyle's talks in eight weekly programs. The remainder of the schedule calls for Mr. Hoyle to discuss "The Stars: Their Origin" on February 25; and subsequent lectures on Sundays, March 4, 11, 25, and April 1 will cover "The Stars: Their Future and Their Fate," "The Origin of the Earth and the Planets," "The Expanding Universe," and "Continuous Creation." I listened to Mr. Hoyle's first lecture over WNYC on February 4, and the experience persuaded me to urge all *SRL* readers who can receive the New York City station on their radios to hear the future talks.

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters operates a program exchange, which provides fifty-one non-commercial educational stations in the United States with tape recordings. These stations are located on a "Basic Bicycle" which ranges from Massachusetts to Oregon to Louisiana and back to New York. The NAEB exchange, less than a year old, aims to service its member stations with four hours a day of "culturally valuable, socially significant, and newsworthy broadcasts." Headquarters are now at the University of Illinois.

Certainly the Hoyle lectures meet these criteria. Seymour Siegel, program director of WNYC, certainly ought to offer the talks to NAEB's "Basic Bicycle" and give radio listeners around the country an opportunity to share the enjoyment of them derived by people who live in the New York area.

FRED HOYLE has an engaging microphone personality. His voice is well-modulated, his manner of address simple and direct, and the words and images with which he tells of stellar matters are quite earthly and clear. This British astronomer thinks that "the sun is a far better bet" for generating energy on a large scale than is "the disintegration of uranium or thorium in a multitude of atomic piles." He reminds you of an officer in a Carol Reed film, quietly spelling out the details of some daring mission, as he states: "I believe . . . that we should trap sunlight on a large scale by the widespread growth of suitable plants in tropical areas. The ultimate product would be alcohol, an excellent substitute for gasoline."

What exciting appeals to the imagination are here offered, what pictures summoned up of space and stars and universes beyond universes and of the apocalyptic transmutation of hydrogen into helium that is taking place in the interior of the sun at 15,000,000 degrees centigrade!

This is one man speaking—no giant cast, no sound-effects, no cameras panning and dollying, no stagehands and technicians falling over each other as

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they frantically move scenery and lower the boom from one set to another. This is the stuff that the science-fiction boys, the Space Cadets, the Dimension-X men, and the 2,000 Plus adventurers struggle so desperately to approach week after plodding earthbound week on the radio and TV schedules and fail to reach at even a shooting star's distance. This is the real thing—thought, pure, unalloyed, pellucid—and this is absorbing.

Are you concerned lest an H-bomb explosion might fire off the hydrogenic oceans in a nuclear chain reaction that would blow up the whole earth? Listen to Mr. Hoyle: "I think fortunately that this is impossible . . . it is not the total quantity of energy released by the bomb that decides whether the oceans will explode. The crucial quantity is the temperature produced, and curiously enough this must be nearly the same in the hydrogen bomb as in the uranium bomb. So we may conclude that although mankind may engage in foolish personal destruction earth itself is safe."

Mr. Hoyle is a very reassuring fellow. The sun's surface, he tells us, is cooler than its center. "If some cosmic giant were to peel off the outer layers of the sun like skinning an orange the tremendously hot inner regions would then be exposed and the radiation emitted into space would be so great that the whole earth would be vaporized within a few minutes. Fortunately, no such circumstance is possible, and the outer layers of the sun provide a sort of blanket that protects us from its inner fire."

THE impression that the sun will cool as time goes by is false, according to Hoyle. "The supply of hydrogen in the sun will last for about fifty billion years, but after ten billion years the sun will be getting too warm for our comfort. . . . As the sun steadily grills the earth, the sun will swell, at first slowly and then with increasing rapidity, until it swallows the inner planets one by one: first Mercury, then Venus, then the earth. Mars is likely to be the last planet to suffer this fate, but it is just possible that an even further extension, as far as Jupiter, will occur. This particular part of the New Cosmology seems to fit in well with medieval ideas about hell."

But there is plenty of life in the old world yet. Mr. Hoyle's timetable of cosmic doom does not relieve us of the necessity for filing our income tax returns by March 15. And beyond 50,000,000,000 A.D.? There is still that theory of continuous creation which Mr. Hoyle will unfold over WNYC in his last lecture. The date of that talk, by helium, is April 1!

—ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON.

Music To My Ears

ERNA BERGER SINGS STRAUSS—"SIEGFRIED"—RUBINSTEIN'S CHOPIN

IN TWENTY years of fairly attentive concertgoing I had never chanced upon something called a "Brentano Cycle" by Richard Strauss until it appeared a few days ago on a program by Erna Berger in Town Hall. Song writers of Strauss's quality being as rare as some of the songs he has written, this seemed a direct command to the attention. For the length of the first item, "An die Nacht," however, the Straussian quality, though present, was hardly uncommon.

But when the soaring voice of remarkable Berger took off in flight across "Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden" ("I would like to make a little bouquet") a fresh phase of the composer's expressive resource showed itself. Related to the decorative impulse known best from the writing for Sophie in "Der Rosenkavalier" and even more acutely from Zerbinetta's air in "Ariadne," it casts a silvery glow on three other songs of this cycle—"Säusle liebe Myrtle," "Als mir dein Lied erklang," and "Amor"—in a kind of vocal writing usually utilized for display rather than expressive purposes. Here the leaps and runs, the ornaments and decorations are as closely related to the poetic concept as they are in certain celebrated works of Mozart.

Though Brentano to most music-lovers automatically suggests Bettina (friend of Goethe and Beethoven), the link here is actually to her brother Klemens, joint editor of the famous "Knaben Wunderhorn" (see page 65). The fanciful lyrics, with the relatively sober but not less exquisite "Lied der Frauen" as conclusion, evoked from Strauss (in 1919) a kind of writing that emphasizes anew the limited evidence by which he is evaluated in this country. Considering that "Frau ohne Schatten" (of this same 1919) is still to be performed here—not to mention half a dozen other major works—there is ample field for exploration by an enterprising impresario.

Erna Berger—"an almost visible halo."

Miss Berger, to be sure, has done much exquisite singing here in the year and a half since her arrival, but nothing quite so steadily superior nor quite so artful. Insignificant to the eye, the sound she uttered wrought an almost visible halo overhead, and if one looked closely the gold dress she wore gave evidence of the wings to supplement such angelic vocalizing. Lest rapture get completely out of hand be it noted that the piano playing of Edwin McArthur remained stolidly earthbound.

* * *

The unfolding panorama of "Ring" dramas at the Metropolitan passed through "Walküre" and "Siegfried" recently en route to the climax of "Götterdämmerung." In both there was extended opportunity to study the current resources of Kirsten Flagstad and Helen Traubel as Brünnhilde, since the schedule has given them turn about. The odd fact seems to be that each has striven to match the strengths of the other: Flagstad by underlining phrase and meaning more than before, Traubel by striving for the vocal heights she has recently disdained. Plainly, however, Flagstad is building on the firmer foundation, to a sum of vocal vigor and dramatic appeal beyond ordinary evaluation.

In other respects these "Ring" performances have been exceptional for the dedication and intensity of Fritz Stiedry's conducting, especially in "Siegfried," and in the same work for the well-organized stage direction of Herbert Graf. Here, too, the splendid breadth of Ferdinand Frantz's Wanderer, the lively art of Peter Klein's Mime, and the potent force of Set Svanholm's Siegfried made this a first-class Wagnerian experience—the first act, anyway. I suppose there are those who have seen a better-sound-

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ing, better-looking young Siegfried than Svanholm, but I am not among them. Gunther Treptow, who made his debut as Siegmund in "Walküre," is a vocalist conscious of time values and words and sings as well as the voice God gave him permits. Or does he? A Tristan to come will tell more about his abilities.

* * *

Why Artur Rubinstein should choose for his first program of the winter in Carnegie Hall a Chopin gambit, I cannot say. Last year's anniversary observations would seem to have exhausted both his and the listener's interest in such a sequence. But the evidence of the evening was *contra mea*, in both respects.

An oddity, if a fleeting one, was the opening "Polonaise-Fantaisie" (Opus 61, A flat). An absorbingly poetic work, it was also a challenge for the listener seeking to recall any similar evocation of tone, force, and poetic meaning from this instrument within recent recollection. The judgment, as Rubinstein explored note values, measured phrasings, took a bead on dynamics, was definitely "No."

Whether the matter in hand was a pair of Mazurkas, the D flat Nocturne, or the B flat minor Sonata the piano in hand vibrated with a fulness and depth of sound that filled the hall as well as the ear. Some of it was inaccurate, a little was indiscreet, but all of it was powerfully personal, with a grandeur of statement transcending detail. After all, it has not been too long a time since Rubinstein was abused by some listeners for valuing exactness above expressiveness.

* * *

TV Notes: NBC TV proved a point, while not really giving an opera in its recent "Gianni Schicchi" in English. The point proven was that an English text could be made intelligible, a dramatic plan strongly maintained despite the inconveniences of singing, watching a conductor, etc. Hans Busch met most of this challenge convincingly, but the performers slighted one detail—singing. The score moved rather haltingly, as word values were extracted and emphasized at the expense of over-all pace and continuity. Virginia Haskins did some artful work in Lauretta's one sustained outburst, but there was not much honor to Puccini otherwise. In the kind of song-speech employed Ralph Herbert was an excellent Gianni and Robert Marshall a strong Rinuccio. Having mastered this much the company might now do a real performance of the work.

—Irving Kolodin.

"I Shall Try To Be A Good Child..."

Armandino's entire family perished in a bombardment. He was found wounded but still alive, in his dead mother's arms . . . he had lost his right arm up to the shoulder, and several fingers of his left hand. For years he wandered homeless and hungry.

Yet Armandino faces life with a smile. Now in a Plan colony near Rome, he writes to his American foster mother:

"Your dear letter is a dear company for me; I read it over and over again, always. Do you know I am beginning to do well at school? I can make the little accounts by myself and solve all the four operations. Only in reading I limp. But I promise to do better. I shall try to be a good child, you will see."

Wherever war has struck, thousands of brave hearts like Armandino's are beating in little maimed bodies, waiting and hoping. . . . You alone, or as a member of a group, can help these children by becoming a foster parent, or by contributing funds for plastic surgery, artificial limbs, glass eyes. As a foster parent you will receive a case history and photograph of your child. Your child is told clearly how he is being helped and that you are his foster parent. Children thus feel that they have a friend, rather than someone who is just giving them charity. Correspondence through our office is encouraged, so that you can ask the child questions about his health and welfare that you would want to know if these were truly your own children.

The Plan is helping children of fourteen different nationalities—in Greece, France, Belgium, Italy, Holland and England. By aiding these children you are working for the greatest aim of all—for peace.

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MUSIC

(*Continued from page* 23)

pantheist among the Cathedral arches, a countryman walking in the nave. . . . The danger of this open-airness is, of course, clumsiness—of the heavy hand with the delicate screw, of the outdoor boots on the fine-pile carpet. That clumsiness Vaughan Williams does not manage always to avoid. It is to be accepted as an inevitable consequence of his mind and nationality; it is often a positive virtue."

Yet Mr. Foss makes clear that Vaughan Williams is no bull in a china shop. Whether he is evoking the countryside in the "Pastoral Symphony," fulfilling the prosody of the English language in settings of Chaucer or Whitman, or revivifying a past age of sacred music in the Mass in G minor he is both an educated man and a perceptive one. "His style, like our language, is intractable but rich, uningratiating at first but sympathetic in the end. . . . So fully have the varying lamps of our literature irradiated his musical mind that in the very Englishness of his idiom there occurs astonishing variety."

To anyone but an Englishman Mr. Foss's valuation of Vaughan Williams is bound to seem a bit exaggerated. But by lifting the composer and his works out of a musicological vacuum into the living, breathing world of literature and daily life the book attains a broader value than many more judicial works of professional musical criticism.

Cecil Smith is editor of Musical America *and music critic of* The New Republic. *His book "Musical Comedy in America" was recently published.*

Music Book Notes

THE STORY OF AN ORCHESTRA. By Boyd Neel. Irving Ravin, New York. $2.50. No one is in a better position than Mr. Neel to take us behind the scenes in English music and show how near the fringe of musical civilization the English are. This little book, which Mr. Neel may or may not have intended for his admirers as a history of the uphill fight of his orchestra during the first seventeen years of its existence, turns out to be a quiet but firm lashing out at the deplorable state of music in England and a plea that somebody do something about it.

At its best Mr. Neel's story follows the struggles of a new musical organization, bent on performing unfamiliar, contemporary, and unjustly neglected music in an unmusical land, with the same kind of intimacy and heart-to-heart attitude which Mr. Neel has always used in conducting. At its worst it lapses into a long and unnecessary travelogue, shot through with digression after digression on the number of miles of wire fencing in Australia, Mr. Neel's opinion of the Australian wines, the scanty social life in New Zealand, and shopping conditions in San Francisco.

Still, "The Story of an Orchestra" is a book that had to be written; in spite of its inadequacies it should be read. Without making his book read like a pep talk Mr. Neel has shown exactly what serious musicians in England are up against. There is a lot he had to get off his chest; and certainly as one of England's finest musicians he had the right.

—Richard O. Singer.

SOME NINETEENTH CENTURY COMPOSERS. By John Horton. Oxford University Press. $1.50. Here is a small book devoted to brief sketches of a dozen composers, by a young writer just coming into notice, which at once commands attention through its striking characterization, sober yet alert style, and above all by the thoughtfulness and originality of its judgments. These qualities are first disclosed in the introduction, stimulating much rewarding thought: on nationalism, and how the composers to be studied exemplify it; on the influence of Liszt, characterized as "the key-man of the century"; on many composers and the much mooted but seldom so clearly defined problem of the livelihood of a modern composer.

Every one of the biographical essays is vivid, thoughtful, and informative. Outstanding are those on Liszt, Smetana, Borodin, Franck, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, and Elgar. Of the pungent yet scrupulously fair characterizations tempting quotation, one or two examples must suffice. Of Liszt: "Never have sublime egotism and magnificent generosity been more strangely interwoven." Of the String Quartet of César Franck (whose Quintet and Violin Sonata are highly praised): "The romantic luxuriance of its texture is fatiguing to the ear of the modern listener who requires from chamber music above all things clean line-drawing and concise expression." And of Saint-Saëns, so hard to place: "The schoolboy definition of a vacuum as a large empty space where the Pope lives might fairly be applied as it stands to the average musician's conception of Saint-Saëns and his music. . . . His fundamental seriousness of purpose, vast erudition, and tireless and often public-spirited industry are discredited, while attention is constantly

drawn to the shallowness and lack of consistent taste and style that mar so much of his work."

Mr. Horton thus adds humor and good nature, those wings of criticism, to the thoughtfulness of temperament and the vividness yet sobriety of style that make his little book so uniquely delightful.

—Daniel Gregory Mason.

ORNAMENTATION IN J. S. BACH'S ORGAN WORKS. By Putnam Aldrich. Coleman-Ross, New York. $2.50. Ornamentation—the musical embellishments that in Bach, as in Rameau, Couperin, and other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century composers, are represented not by the notes but by a form of shorthand—has been discussed exhaustively by an impressive list of scholars, of whom Dannreuther, Schweitzer, and Pirro are best known. The reception Putnam Aldrich's modest volume has been given in the short time since its publication indicates that as an authority it may well supersede Dannreuther—no mean achievement. It is the author's contention that, except for an article by Wanda Landowska in the *Bach-Jahrbuch* for 1910, no available commentary is based exclusively on sources accessible to Bach himself. Schweitzer and Pirro drew largely from Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach, who was influenced by an era that followed his father; Dannreuther, according to the author, introduced ornaments that Bach had never heard of, ornaments not invented until the generation following Bach.

We cannot go to an autograph manuscript, since the ornaments were such a matter of convention at that time that Bach left most of them unindicated or marked with the most casual abbreviation. The performers of that day, being for the most part also composers, knew the conventions and supplied the proper ornament for a given musical situation. Experts who have since aimed at establishing the meaning of the abbreviations and clarifying the etiquette of ornamentation have

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often produced musical anachronisms, and in many instances disagree among themselves. Aldrich has tried to set forth an agreement for the *agréments*, so to speak. Many a practical musician will welcome these sixty pages as a guide to playing Bach's music, whether composed for the organ or any other instrument. Even a non-performer would find his enjoyment of Bach's music enhanced by a familiarity with Aldrich's ideas. —DAVID HEBB.

BEL CANTO. By Cornelius L. Reid. Coleman-Ross. $4.50. This is an earnest and sincere book. What Cornelius Reid has to say about the principles on which the concept of *bel canto* rests is sound and valuable. His basic premise, that beautiful singing cannot be attained by trying to reproduce the physical symptoms which accompany it, is unassailable and is wholeheartedly shared by this reviewer. His indictment of the practitioners of the so-called "scientific methods of vocal production," who mistake such symptoms for the causative factors of esthetically valid singing, is well presented and convincing.

How successful the author has been in describing procedures designed to assist the student in learning how to sing beautifully is another matter. Over half of his book is devoted to the discussion of such procedures. This portion, unfortunately, tends to bog down in semantic confusion.

For instance, discussing ways to correct a wobble Mr. Reid writes: "As forcing for volume is usually the cause, the first step is to reduce the energy expended so that all 'push' is eliminated. A sense of 'hold' must be developed (not to be confused with a 'grip' or 'squeeze') rather than 'drive.'"

I am afraid that only those can understand this perhaps excellent admonition who are already thoroughly familiar with the arbitrary meanings Mr. Reid attaches to such words as push, hold, grip, etc., when applied to vocalized sounds. Those unacquainted with Mr. Reid's private terminology describing sound qualities and sensations accompanying sound production can hardly be expected to benefit from his advice. —SERGIUS KAGEN.

THE VICTOR BOOK OF BALLETS AND BALLET MUSIC. By Robert Lawrence. Simon & Schuster. $3.95. Like all of the Victor Book series, this compilation is useful—up to a point. A hundred and twenty-six ballets are discussed, there is an introductory "Ballet Perspective," many photographs and musical illustrations are used, and the scope does include material not previously available in previous allied books like the Beaumont

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—*The Boston Herald*

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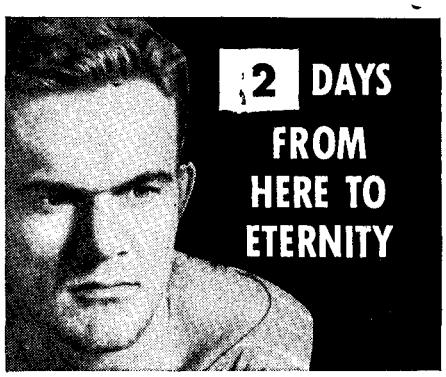

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or Roberts. Mr. Lawrence really has covered much ground and has not confined himself to Victor. The omissions are fewer than one would ordinarily expect, though why ballets like "Cotillon," "Sebastian," "Three Virgins and a Devil," "La Fille Mal Gardée," "Judgment of Paris," "Frankie and Johnny," "Night Shadow," or "Les Patineurs" have been omitted in favor of forgotten curiosities like, say, "Namouna" or "La Tragédie de Salomé" is hard to conceive.

The big defect of the book is the helter-skelter manner in which it seems to be put together. The scholarship is not exactly stringent, and there is little consistency. Sometimes original casts are given, sometimes not; sometimes there is plenty of documentation about dates and revivals, at other times such information is entirely absent. At times many musical illustrations are used; at others there is merely one lonely staff to describe a large-scale work, or even none at all. In any case to what use can the snippets of musical illustration that dot most of the ballets be put?

Throughout the book there is a certain amount of editorializing and passing of judgments that is out of place in a work intended as a reference. The picture captions contain errors, and many dancers shown are not identified.

—Rosalyn Krokover.

FICTION

(*Continued from page 15*)

to achieve her equivocal ends. She had ruined her husband and stolen her sister's. Having married the violinst Florian Ambros she burned his Stradivarius for its insurance value and drove him to suicide. Because she was dependent on Joy's income she destroyed the girl's one romance. She was about to ruin her son's marriage, when Joy intervened. The list of Ann's iniquities makes her final conversion hard to believe. But her macabre career holds the reader's horrified interest to the end.

"Danger from Deer" is not the same spectacular tour de force as Miss Baum's "Grand Hotel," but it contains vivid writing and scenes of dramatic power, particularly in prewar Vienna and in San Francisco during the earthquake. —Ray Pierre.

GLENCANNON MEETS TUGBOAT ANNIE. By Guy Gilpatric and Norman Reilly Raine. Harper. $2.50. Guy Gilpatric and Norman Reilly Raine have probably worn out more typewriters than most authors have ribbons. For years each has held title to a bread-and-butter magazine story character, Mr. Gilpatric being the proprietor of marine engineer Colin Glencannon and Mr. Raine the owner of salty-seawoman Tugboat Annie Brennan.

A collaboration between the two authors to bring their characters together probably seemed as sound a piece of business as, say, the merger of Ford and General Motors. Unfortunately, the literary combine does not prove to be in the public interest. "Glencannon Meets Tugboat Annie" would be a less-than-routine performance from either man alone.

The collaborators have tried to make up by the lavish use of humorous devices for the lack of a substantial humorous situation. In the course of the book Annie and her dockside rivals steal Glencannon's ship back and forth from one another several times, with Glencannon now on one side, now on the other. This amounts to perhaps one short story's worth of comic plot, and the heavy padding of malapropisms, belches, Scotch dialect, elaborately unprofane invective, lost false teeth, and fanciful synonyms for whisky cannot make it a novel's worth.

There are some funny cracks in the book and even now and then a funny scene. But in total effect Mr. Gilpatric and Mr. Raine have not written a comedy; they have merely compiled a joke book. —Vance Bourjaily.

CRY ABOVE THE WINDS. By J. B. Bartlett. Morrow. $3. The recipe for this novel about pre-Gold Rush California must have struck its author as delightfully simple. Just begin, she appears to have thought, with an adventurous young Bostonian who comes out to Monterey as super-cargo on a schooner and stays there for two years as guest of one of the old Spanish families. Add two beautiful young girls, one wealthy and heartless, the other poor but genuinely in love with the hero. Mix with several assorted ruffians in military uniform, a courageous but ultimately ineffectual Spanish priest, and an embittered, knife-throwing hunchback. Toss into the mixing bowl at irregular intervals a few lumps of historical data dealing in turn with the interiors of the houses of the Spanish aristocracy, the capture of sea otters, the secularization of the monasteries, and the machinations of California politicians seeking a native son instead of a Spaniard for their governor.

A historical novelist has a difficult job today if he wants to win serious attention. Most of his potential readers have seen far too many class-B movies, read too much fiction full of self-conscious picturesqueness to feel anything but uneasy at the sight of a

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

THE ETERNAL QUESTION MARK

The following patchwork poem consists of questions asked by twenty famous poets. Can you name the author or the poem from which each line is quoted? Allowing two and one-half points for each correct answer, a score of fifty is par, sixty is very good, and seventy or better is excellent. Answers on page 44.

1. O say, what art thou, when no more thou'rt thee?
2. What immortal hand or eye could frame thy fearful symmetry?
3. Shall I, to please another wine-sprung minde, lose all my own?
4. What sight worth seeing could I see?

5. If there were dreams to sell, what would you buy?
6. Why should every creature drink but I?
7. Do you know what the days will do to you?
8. Withered and shaken, what can an old man do but die?

9. Time, you old gypsy, why hasten away?
10. Is there beyond the silent night an endless day?
11. Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?
12. Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?

13. Where had I been now if the worst befell?
14. Shall I, like a hermit, dwell on a rock or in a cell?
15. Who shall dare to chide me for loving that old arm-chair?
16. Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?

17. Why should sorrow o'er that brow a shadow fling?
18. What is the worth in anything but so much money as't will bring?
19. Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
20. O! Grave where is thy victory? O! Death where is thy sting?

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book subtitled, as this one is, "A Novel of Old California." An author who succeeds, as Mrs. Bartlett does, in keeping from her pages all evidence of anything important to communicate as well as all trace of the way people actually talk and think certainly does nothing to allay the reader's worst fears. Even the Hollywood studios had better think twice before they purchase the movie rights to this triumph of insipidity.

—DOROTHY KOCH BESTOR.

JACKSON MAHAFFEY. By Fred Ross. Houghton Mifflin. $3. A young North Carolinian wins his spurs. No magnolia-encircled columns, no guitar-strumming for him; this is poor-white stuff, insistently genre and aggressively Southern. Orphaned Jackson Mahaffey lies, gambles, wallows in cock fights and corn "likker," leading to the right with brass knuckles as occasion demands. There's a pistol in his jacket, too, ready for use when the jug is empty. The voice of authority packs a wallop. The sheriff seems to have taken to the hills. The way is clear for our roisterer. A good girl, old-time religion, and the state senatorship reward this slaphappy son of the soil.

Dungaree derring-do, bristling with brawls, choked with cornpone prose, and murky with moonshine.

—CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN.

DARK DRUMS. By Wenzell Brown. Appleton-Century-Crofts. $3. Working out of legends and a lurid imagination Wenzell Brown here fashions a feverish period novel of Jamaican life between the years 1794 and 1815. The result, unfortunately, is more hysterical than historical, a comic-book for adults. Perhaps the book was voodooed by the spirit of its strange and repellent heroine, Kate Donley.

Kate is only the central piece of apparatus in Mr. Brown's Gothic gearings. The book is mechanically complete. It contains weird drum-beatings in the steaming Jamaican jungle. It boasts a turreted castle with the forbidding name of Rune Hall. It has witch doctors who seem to move by levitation. It abounds in riot, murder, and sex: Mr. Brown rips up bodices with a Hollywoodian disregard of expense and subtlety. The writing is appropriately one long Technicolorful sizzle.

Mr. Brown's command of regional and period data is admirable. But his heroine is an insane monster who, forfeiting our sympathies, fails even to hold our clinical interest. This is true of his other characters as well; none holds our interest for the reason that each is a part of a grotesque piece of mechanical make-believe. It moves but it doesn't live.

Mr. Brown, who knows his West Indies and Far East at first hand—many readers will remember "Hong Kong Aftermath"—has the material for serious creative work. Obviously he has the necessary gift for invention and drama. With this flamboyant bid for bestsellerdom out of his system perhaps he will now settle down to write to please himself. Our guess is that it will pay off better in the end in every way.

—CHARLES LEE.

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(*Continued from page 18*)

Germany then is about what occurred recently in General MacArthur's dash to reach the Yalu River.

As a regular officer of the German Army Speidel disclaims and disowns the atrocities committed under Hitler. The book's objective may be to regain some of Germany's military honor, but whatever the intention it is a highly interesting account of the death struggle of Germany in World War II. And because of General Speidel's participation in the current problems of rearming Western Germany the book gains additional significance.

Harry C. Butcher, a captain in the inactive Naval Reserve, was a wartime aide of General Eisenhower. He is the author of "My Two Years with Eisenhower."

Hindsight on Conflict

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. By H. C. O'Neill (Strategicus). New York: Frederick A. Praeger. 345 *pp.* $4.

By Geoffrey Bruun

As a military analyst who uses the pen name "Strategicus" H. C. O'Neill is well known to British readers of the *Observer, Spectator,* and *Telegraph.* His comprehensive history of World War I remains one of the most detailed and authoritative surveys on the subject, and his eight volumes on World War II have been praised by the critics for their soundness and penetration.

To compress the global conflict of 1939-1945 into some three hundred pages is a campaign in itself. The author has organized his account in six chapters, preceded by a prelude and completed by an inquest. Hindsight fortified by a wide acquaintance with war and postwar literature permits him to reconstruct the campaigns in critical perspective and to evaluate the forces and the leaders that shaped them. He states his opinions with frankness and conviction. He rates air power highly; he praises the American strategy in the Pacific; he admires Churchill, commends Eisenhower, and respects Montgomery. The German military machine, though misdirected by Hitler, proved itself in his opinion the most resilient, disciplined fighting organization that has ever existed.

The political judgments expressed in this volume may irk American readers. O'Neill repeats the old charge that the British plan to invade the Balkans was overruled from Washington. He is persuaded that Montgomery could have beat the Russians to Berlin if Eisenhower had not held him back, presumably because the manner in which Germany would collapse was realized "not at all" by the Americans. He believes the peace was lost through Roosevelt's naïveté. "No suspicion of any ulterior motive on Russia's part entered the American mind." These views do not jibe with Churchill's revelations and ignore the known fact that London was sometimes ready to go farther than Washington in wooing Russia during the most critical phases of the war. In 1942 Churchill would have recognized the Russian claim to the Baltic states had it not been for Roosevelt's firm protests.

Opinions always appear more uncompromising and peremptory when reduced to a compressed telegraphic prose. The defects of this volume, the traces of bias, dogmatism, and confusion, are largely the results of an overconstricted style. Complex personalities and political issues cannot be justly appraised in a few lines. No ordinary reader, even with frequent reference to the seventeen maps and thirty-page chronology, can easily absorb the semi-technical discussions of the campaigns or identify the hundreds of names cited. Nor is the obscurity lessened by the needless involution of many sentences and the indifference shown to logical antecedents. Even a patient reader thoroughly conversant with the "Darlan Deal" can be annoyed by such a statement as "Later on the outcry against Eisenhower's very limited collaboration with him was extinguished by his assassination." The sentence (and there are others like it) is not only ambiguous, it is prejudicial. Eisenhower's "collaboration" with Darlan was approved by Churchill as "overwhelmingly justified on military grounds." And Darlan's death did not end the outcry.

But minor flaws must not be overemphasized in judging a book that is distinguished on the whole by broad understanding, sobriety, and an intimate grasp of modern technological warfare.

Cloak-and-Dagger Man

SKORZENY'S SECRET MISSIONS. By Otto Skorzeny. Translated by Jacques Le Clercq. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 256 *pp.* $3.

By Henry B. Kranz

"IT IS truly amazing to see how much attention books by and about defeated Nazi leaders are getting today, not only in Germany but even in countries which seem very much concerned with the growth of democracy in Germany." This is what one of Germany's leading newspapers recently had to say about the flood of sensational war memoirs, "confessions," and "revelations" now crowding the bookstores.

"Skorzeny's Secret Missions"—the "war memoirs of the most dangerous man in Europe" as it is modestly called by the publisher—is the story of the Viennese terrorist who rescued Mussolini, kidnaped Horthy's son, and for a time was in charge of terrorist bands in Germany. (This side of his activities, however, is not mentioned.) Skorzeny is never critical, he does not draw new portraits of the Nazi leaders he met, he never stops admiring the man who was responsible for Germany's defeat. It is no surprise that he writes with little skill or insight.

The publisher's dust jacket also asks us to believe that these memoirs "reveal the diabolical strength of Nazi ingenuity and the terrible failures of Allied sources of intelligence." The reader will not agree. The book is simply the story of a commando officer who was not afraid of death, the story of a man who knew how to fight but knew hardly anything beyond it, of a German who was a Nazi because he was a fanatical nationalist and not for political reasons, and who was only happy when there were excitement, adventure, murder, death. One can hardly call Skorzeny heroic. He rarely fought numerically superior forces and he never suffered any hardships.

In 1943 Skorzeny was asked to form a special unit of the *Ausland Abwehr,* as the group of military secret service units, responsible only to the German High Command, was called. Captain Skorzeny soon became the most famous commando leader of this group. He always remembered Nietzsche's advice: "Live dangerously." He devised many "magnificent but utterly unworkable plans" and finally met his "great Fuehrer," in whom he had absolute confidence. Skorzeny was "deeply moved," he tells us, by the "warmth and feeling" of Hitler's words, when Hitler asked him to liber-

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ate Mussolini, at that time a prisoner in the hands of Badoglio.

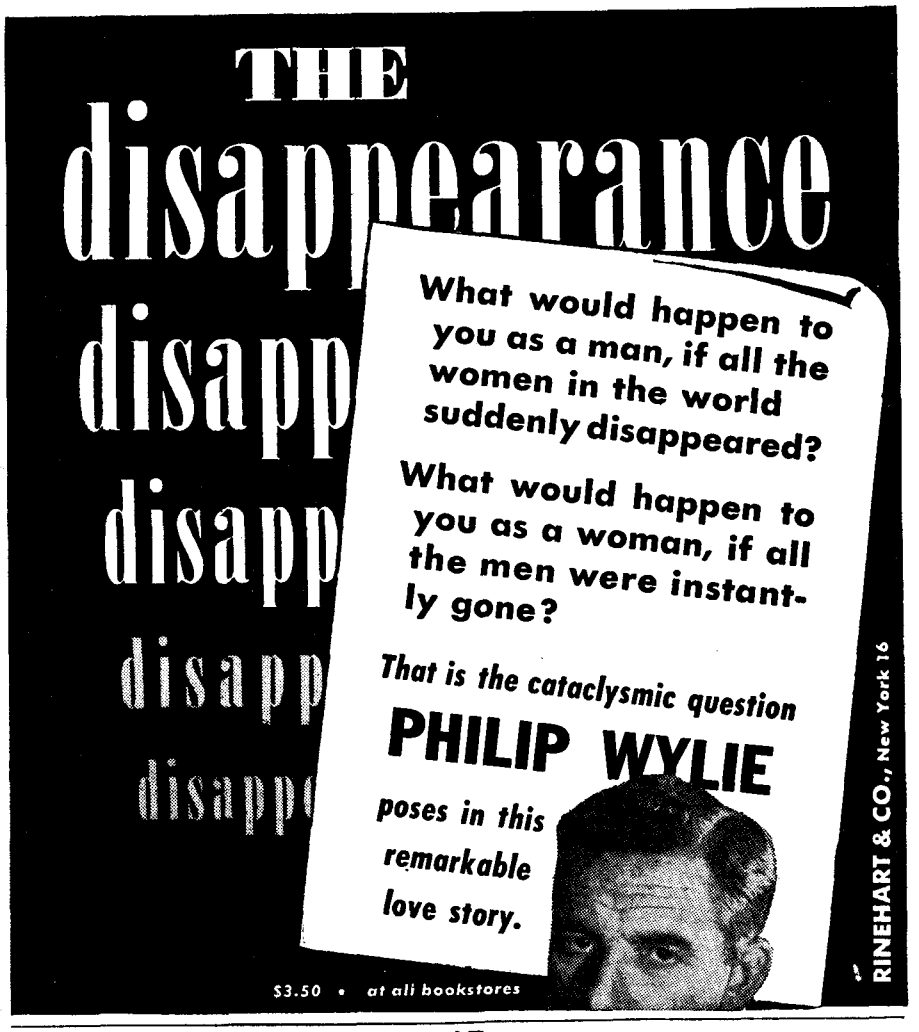
The story of how Skorzeny, because "the salvation of Germany was at stake," organized this difficult feat has been told before, but it gains in drama, intensity, and suspense when described by the man who was actually in command of the gliders swooping down from the sky to kidnap the Duce. The aeronautical experts were all against the project, we are reminded. Hitler and Skorzeny alone believed it was possible.

There is one other fascinating story of a cloak-and-dagger mission in this book. In September 1944 Hitler called Skorzeny to his headquarters and asked him to prepare the military occupation of Admiral Horthy's castle in Budapest, because it had been learned that the Hungarian dictator was about "to betray the duties incumbent upon him to his treaty of alliance with Germany." In an operation which lasted only half an hour Skorzeny succeeded in capturing first Niklas Horthy, the regent's son, and then the admiral himself. The Hungarian Honveds, like Badoglio's troops, did not put up much resistance. They all liked war much less than the German conquerors.

Skorzeny's last project never came off. He had been chosen for a difficult task within the framework of the German offensive in December 1944 and was ordered to occupy several bridges on the Meuse, with his men wearing American and British uniforms, using Allied weapons. But the offensive, as we know, collapsed, and Skorzeny once more had to abandon his operation. But given a chance he would undoubtedly have succeeded again.

When Germany collapsed in 1945 Skorzeny preferred to surrender to the American troops in Austria rather than die like his beloved leaders Hitler, Goebbels, or Himmler. He was later tried by an Allied court but not convicted. His whereabouts today are not known.

And furthermore the publisher of his memoirs does not tell us why we are reading them in a translation from the French nor who wrote the introduction to the book, wherein we are informed that the Allied ultimatum of unconditional surrender meant for the Germans that the die was cast—theirs was to conquer or perish—and that this state of mind, "in part at least," explains the Skorzeny "phenomenon." All this is just one of the many mysteries surrounding this adventure story from the pen of a fanatical, rather simple-minded, although always dangerous Nazi officer, of whom we may sometime hear again.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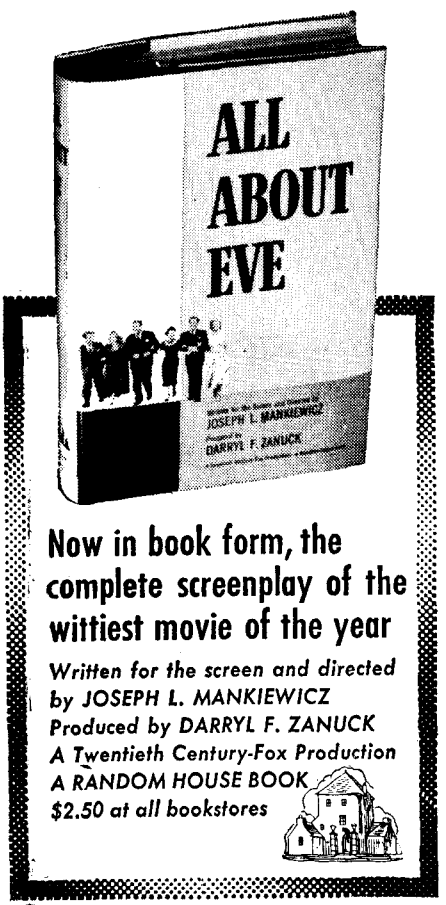
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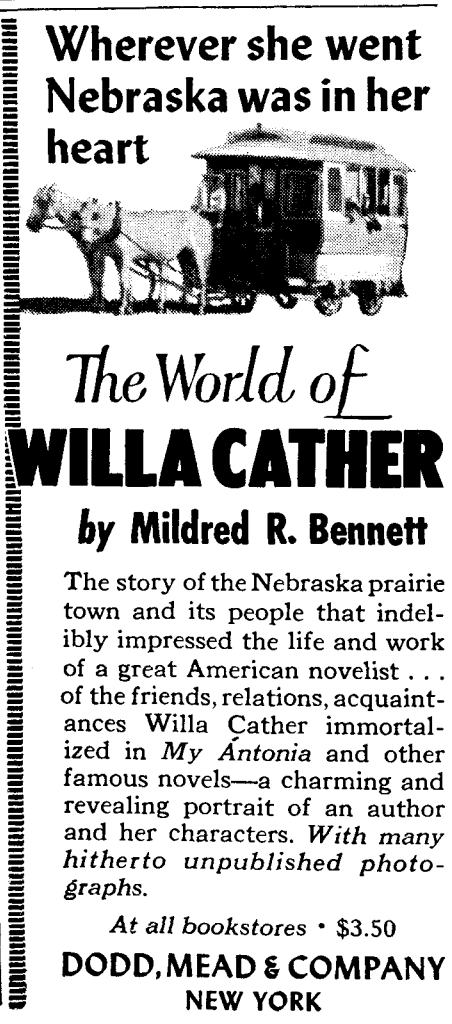
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War Book Notes

ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT. *By W. Stanley Moss. Macmillan.* $2.50. It is a pity that this book is being published so late, for this is true adventure at its best. But the importance and fascination of the adventure have already faded into history. Who today remembers Major General Karl Kreipe of the Twenty-Second Panzergrenadier Division and commander of the German forces in Crete? Yet this story of how two British officers —one of them author Moss—and ten guerrillas kidnaped Nazi Kreipe has retained the freshness of a spectacular event of nerve and daring.

It probably didn't make any strategic difference whether Kreipe was kidnaped or stayed put. But there may have been tactical and psychological advantage in snatching a high-ranking Nazi straight out of his lair. It meant a well-timed ambush of the general's car, overpowering of his companions, driving through German sentry posts, and trying to console Kreipe on the loss of his medal of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross. All this, of course, as Moss and Major Patrick Leigh-Fermor were wearing German uniforms but unable to utter more than a few phrases in German.

The whole thing seems straight out of a small boy's daydreams or an Errol Flynn movie. The general proved companionable enough, talking about his family and how he had feasted on caviar at the Kuban front in Russia. But the efforts to get Kreipel out of Crete or even to the shore, so that he could be shipped to Cairo, were wearying, dangerous, and nerve-racking. The British officers discovered that they had much in common with the general, including appreciation of Sophocles and a dislike for fleas. Finally, guided by former sheep thieves, they made their way to the sea and were picked up by a British boat. Everyone took off his shoes and left them behind, because there was a shortage of footwear in Crete. There were lobster sandwiches on board.

The whole thing is presented with excellent good humor. Moss had the good sense to retain the original diary of his exploit, merely interspersing it with explanatory passages. The Crete kidnaping reads like something out of a bygone era. It has overtones of "The Three Musketeers," of gentlemanly combat, of honor among soldiers. Moss hardly lets you hear the bombs falling on Cretan villages in reprisal for such guerrilla action as the Kreipel kidnaping. For all his Teutonic soldiery from Verdun to Sevastopol, Kreipel emerges very much the German *Hausvater,* the bourgeois head of the family whose dachshund fetches the slippers every night at six sharp.

The book makes you feel good. You put it down with the sort of glow that comes with a happy ending. Kreipel is being delivered at Cairo, and all is well at Shepheard's Hotel. But there is one afterthought that refuses to be quiet: if only one Cretan died, if only one house was burned down in reprisal—then the Kreipel kidnaping may have been a little more than a high-level boyish prank and not worth the price.

—MARTIN EBON.

THE PURSE AND THE SWORD: *Control of the Army by Congress through Military Appropriations,* 1933-1950. *By Elias Huzar. Cornell University Press.* $4.50. Elias Huzar's scholarly examination of the shaping of U. S. military budgets takes on immense pertinence as Congress once again begins to appropriate astronomical sums of dollars for wartime needs. In theory at least it is the size of the purse (whose strings are controlled by Congress) that determines the length and strength of the sword (whose tempering is the responsibility of the military agencies). Thus in theory does civil authority checkrein the military power under democratic government.

In actual fact, however, matters are infinitely more complicated and far less clear cut. And these complications make the value of Professor Huzar's study. The legislative watchdog is not a never-sleeping array of solons but rather a small subcommittee in each House of harassed, overworked Congressmen and Senators. On their shoulders rests the burden of doling out funds or opening the floodgates; their colleagues both on the appropriations committees and in the two Houses merely ratify their judgments. The veriest tyro will perceive that by such arrangement the advantage lies with the military; and Mr. Huzar—who doesn't like to see an advantage of this sort lie with anybody—is disturbed at various points. After a thorough and well-organized discussion of the problem as it respects Congressional competence to deal with an appallingly detailed budget and military policy, he offers several conservative if unexciting recommendations. One such is better fiscal management on the part of the military establishment; another is that Congress overhaul its appropriations machinery.

—PETER R. LEVIN.

"Well, I must admit, Mr. Slocum, that your notes would make a most original 'Bachelor's Guide to the Islands' . . ."

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The Film Forum

DANCE FESTIVAL

***The Saturday Review's* Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Something new in film programing has been worked out by Brandon Films, and many weary program planners will give it their immediate applause. The five Dance Festival Films reviewed below are available to all non-theatrical groups in one complete unit. As a packaged program they help solve some of the film-user's most irritating problems: the films can all be booked from one single source; they come mounted on two large reels, with only one break for intermission; appealing to special-interest groups, they will attract a more eager audience than most miscellaneous programs would do, and a special publicity kit is available with the films—prepared news releases, illustrated program notes, small posters, and glossy prints.*

With all these advantages, there remains the business of having to take the whole set of films without being able to hand-pick them. In this case the films are different and interesting enough so that it isn't too great a problem. But more experimentation in programing is in order.

For rental particulars and sales information on the dance films write to Brandon Films, 1700 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

SATIN SLIPPERS
Produced by the Australian National Film Board. Written, edited, and directed by Doc. K. Sternberg. Narrated by John Bushelle. (51 min.)

This film, spotlighting ballet in Australia, is as unpretentious and as winning as the Australian people themselves. Distinctly European in tradition yet separated by half the globe from its cultural roots, Australia presents some most striking examples of progress in the arts and sciences. "Satin Slippers" shows how this young and energetic nation set about to develop its own company of professional dancers, its own audiences, and in time its own ballets. With humor and with insight into some of its fledgling faults the film steps lightly and sweetly onto the amateur and professional ballet stages of the country and shows equally clearly the behind-scene activities, down to the making of the dance slippers. For students and teachers there would seem to be special inspiration in the abundance of rehearsal, practice, and performance shots, excerpts from classical and modern works, and in the well-captured feeling of devotion which the young dancers have for their art and their work.

RUSSIAN BALLET AND FOLK DANCES (7 min.)

Excerpted from older Russian feature films, these selections first show the famous ballerina Ulanova in scenes from "Swan Lake," all the more appreciated after one has seen scattered bits of it in the Australian film reviewed above. Following this there are several minutes of strenuous folk-dancing, rousingly performed at breakneck speed.

THE FABLE OF THE PEACOCK
A Regency Production, produced by Jo Schaeffer. Directed and photographed by Dwight Godwin. Musical score by Dr. Wasantha Wana Singh. (14 min., color)

The Oriental dance is recorded here in all its charm, beauty, and simplicity. Danced and narrated most attractively by Lakshimi Wana Singh, this film is a delight in every respect. The dancing, the music, and the story, which is told verbally and through stylized hand gestures, are interestingly balanced in the film to good advantage. Children as well as adults will enjoy this fanciful and graceful dance-story of how the animals of the jungle cured the peacock of his vanity.

THE DESPERATE HEART
Filmed by Walter V. Strate. Danced and choreographed by Valerie Bettis; music by Bernardo Segall. (11 min.)

A broad jump from classical dancing styles brings us to the modern dance film. This one, based on a poem by John Malcolm Brinnin, revives the bitter memory of love, the loneliness and incomplete desires of a truly desperate heart. Without having seen the dance in its original stage presentation it is difficult to evaluate the film version satisfactorily—but it seems an admirable effort in many respects, and its use of a variety of camera effects, particularly double-exposures, seems essential to the total effect of the dance. Despite the prevailing melancholy and the unevenness of Miss Bettis's reading of the poem (one wonders if speech is essential or even helpful in a dance film), there is a consistent appeal—not for children, however. Needless to add, Miss Bettis is a most photogenic young dancer.

THE MOOR'S PAVANNE (Variation on the Theme of Othello)
Filmed by Walter V. Strate. Danced by José Limon and group. Artistic advisor, Doris Humphrey. (16 min., color or black-and-white)

Photographed against a black background, costumed in strikingly colored robes, this is perhaps the most modern dance film yet produced. A thoroughly rich blending of color, texture, motion, rhythm, facial expression, music, and poetry (this time I feel sure that the latter is *de trop*), the film seemed at times over-intense, over-concentrated; yet, fortunately, it maintains a striking air of artistic self-awareness.

All in all, the Dance Festival is an interesting and important assemblage of films, pleasantly varied and entertaining. At a later date the films will be available for individual rental.

—CECILE STARR.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

THEY HAVEN'T MAPPED HEAVEN—YET

WE CAN'T think of a more skittish business these days than map making, and accordingly we have held a conference with Caleb Hammond, Jr., who heads the C. S. Hammond Company, for the past fifty hazardous years producers of maps and atlases.

Mr. Hammond, who is only thirty-five, showed up from his home in Maplewood, New Jersey, in a conservative brown nailhead suit, a white shirt, and what we took to be a brown clip-on bow tie, looking every inch the unruffled suburbanite. He told us that Hammond covered itself in the present crisis by putting out "Military Maps of all Theatres of Operation," a portfolio which covers tender areas both East and West.

"When the trouble started in June," he said, "we didn't know whether the Russians would march into Iran and Iraq at the same time or if the thing would spread into Europe." The company couldn't call the folder a "battle map" since Korea was more than a battle, nor could they call it a "war map" since the fracas was something less than a war. Despite the cumbersome, embracing title, Hammond has sold 500,000 copies at its retail store in New York City and through its wholesale outlets.

To keep its maps up to date Hammond's editors are in constant touch with foreign governments the world over. When a Hammond man finds a squib in the paper about a change in a border he dispatches letters to the governments involved and asks for a confirmation. "Letters are coming in from everywhere daily," Mr. Hammond informed us. "Saw a couple this morning—one from the Canal Zone and the other from the Malay States."

There hasn't been a word from the Russian satellite countries since the Soviets rang down the curtain, he told us. "Letters to those countries aren't being answered, and we've just about given up." There are other sources open to the cartographer, however. About eighteen months ago a fellow came into the office with a five-foot roll under his arm and wanted to know if Hammond would like to buy a new map of Russia. "We bought a print of it, had our editors transliterate it, and showed it to the Government. State Department sent us an order for extra prints," Hammond said.

In poring over the new Russian map the Hammond people discovered that the shape of the Caspian Sea has changed greatly. "It used to have a long blob on the end of it," Mr. Hammond informed us. "Well that's all gone now, a hundred square miles or more. That's a landlocked lake, and I wouldn't be surprised if the springs were diverted for irrigation."

The Hammond Company also keeps a file on name changes of all the world's communities, and frequently the staff amuses itself by tracing the career of a Russian politician by noting the towns that are named in his honor. A new commissar may get a village named for him, and as his career progresses he may be honored with a city or a county. "Then suddenly his name disappears altogether," Hammond said. "He has probably ended up in some salt mine in Siberia."

Occasionally the company gets an opportunity to straighten out the ownership records of the world's real estate. Such an occasion arose once when it tried to find out who owned the Machias Seal Islands off the coast of Maine. "We wrote the Canadians," Hammond recalled, "and asked, 'Are they yours, because you keep a lighthouse on them?' 'No,' answered the Canadians, 'we never considered them ours; we always thought of them as sovereignty undetermined.'"

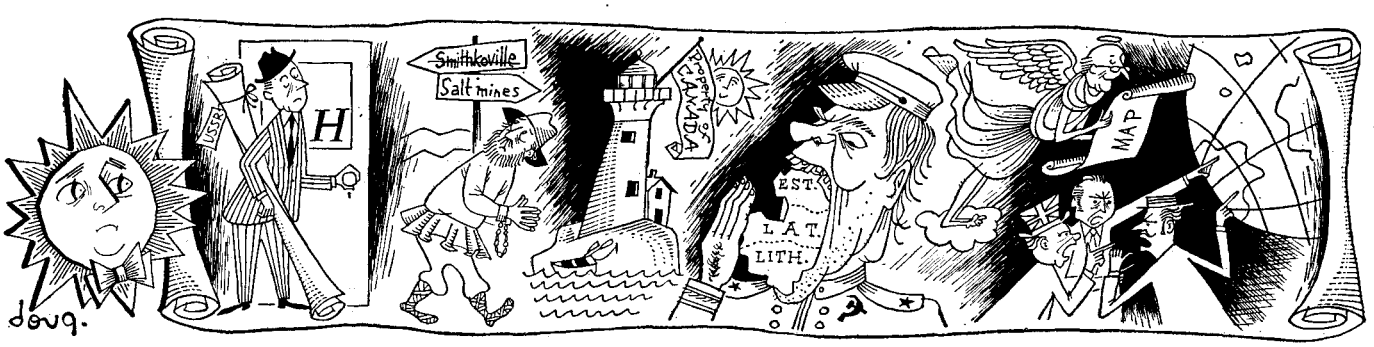
Thereupon Hammond dispatched a letter to the U. S. Department of the Interior and asked if the islands were American territory. Interior sent a disclaimer, too. Hammond then sent a perturbed letter to both governments, demanding to know what would happen if the Russians sailed up and planted the Soviet flag on the Machias Seal Islands. Canada sent a quick reply and said it was taking over.

"We try to present things the way they are, not the way we think they should be," Mr. Hammond declared, a policy which frequently has the company in hot water with somebody or other. When Russia swallowed up the Baltic republics of Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania just before World War II the aggression was not recognized by our State Department. Nonetheless, when Hammond was called upon to prepare an atlas for the Encyclopedia Britannica the cartographer showed the countries as part of Russia. The State Department created quite a fuss, called the Hammond editors and the Britannica editors down to Washington. "They even threatened to have us recall every copy of their Atlas," Hammond says, but it all finally blew over.

SUCH a stew was kicked up by Argentina and Chile over a map which Hammond prepared for sale in South America that the company finally had to print two separate editions—one with a border that would satisfy Argentina and one that would be acceptable to Chile.

The whole mapping situation around the South Pole is a fantastic tangle, Hammond reports. Argentina is claiming the Falkland Islands, which hitherto had been British. "We are now marking the Falklands as 'British territory claimed by Argentina.'" One sector on the underside of the globe is presently being claimed by three governments—Argentina, Chile, and Great Britain. "There are probably some minerals in there," Hammond believes, "and these countries figure that someday they'll have a chance to get them out."

The Hammond Company has recently moved its plant to a site in Maplewood, New Jersey, near Mr. Hammond's home. The retail store will remain in New York, where it occupies a location not very far from the new United Nations center. "We were happy when the U.N. moved to



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New York," said Hammond, "because we figured we could get lots of information there. Actually it has worked the other way around. The U.N. has discovered that it is easier for us to get maps from a country than for it to ask the nation directly. The U.N. man would have to go through a dozen different channels, but we've developed contacts through the years and we know where to apply."

The company was founded in 1900 by Caleb Stillson Hammond, who had been a salesman for Rand McNally and was our Mr. Hammond's grandfather. Sixty per cent of the employees in the Maplewood plant are editorial people, and three-quarters of their time is spent keeping existing maps up to date. Besides maps and atlases Hammond puts out a star finder, which is really a sky map, and such commercial items as map-calendar combinations, which it imprints with the names of gas stations, coal companies, and local funeral homes.

Caleb, Junior, took over the reins in 1948 after a three year hitch in the Coast Guard, spent mostly training amphibious troops on an old tub in the Pacific. "I was another Mr. Roberts," he says. A little shaky about assuming the presidency at his age (he was then thirty-three), he has since been seasoned by such map-making crises as the sudden Korean conflict and by such successes as "Hammond's Complete World Atlas," published last year and taken by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Over three hundred thousand copies are now in print.

In fifty years of map making Hammond has survived the demise of such countries as Bosnia, Montenegro, East Rumelia, and Servia, all of which appeared on the maps of Europe purveyed by Caleb I when he opened for business at the turn of the century. Hammond maps of Brazil were already showing the so-called River of Doubt, now known as the Rio Roosevelt, when Teddy Roosevelt's expedition received official credit for its discovery. Through the years the company has supplied the maps and charts for the adventures of Lindbergh, Post, Chamberlin, Clyde Pangborn, Bernt Balchen, and Ruth Nichols. It still gets letters from old customers, one of whom wrote recently, "I am now over eighty so don't need no maps of this world. If you have any of the hoped-for next world, might buy one—some think I should be more interested in the lower regions."

Letters come to Hammond's offices from people who insist the world is flat. "Anybody knows that if the world was round everybody would fall off," most of them say. The company used to be good for ten or twelve of those a year, but recently they've dwindled down to three or four. Mr. Hammond concludes that people are getting wiser every day.

—HORACE SUTTON.

TRAVELERS' TALES

JOURNEY TO SIWA. By Robin Maugham. Harcourt, Brace. $3.75. Siwa is an oasis in the middle of the Egyptian desert; its single men sleep outside the town walls because they cause too much trouble in the harems, and the married men stay married only until they get bored with a wife. Then they divorce and marry again. The site of an ancient oracle, Siwa was once visited by Alexander the Great. In this instance it has been invaded by Somerset's nephew Robin. To get there Robin Maugham needed the help of three pashas, one Egyptian general, and five separate visits to the Egyptian Frontier Office, a half-hour by tram from Cairo. The Egyptians are developing a handsome bureaucracy. On the road the party passed the El Alamein cemetery, which gave Maugham an opportunity for some of his best writing. Siwa itself is given a clinical treatment, with frequent references and footnotes to other works on the strange community. The volume is packed with interesting photographs by Dimitri Papadimou.

ALL THE BEST IN SWITZERLAND. By Sidney Clark. Dodd, Mead. $4. Sidney Clark's formula in this his twelfth travel book is to present first what he calls the "foreground of the picture," which is to say the facts about traveling and living. He then discusses the "background of the picture," intended to give travelers a bit about history; and thirdly he puts you in the picture and tells where to go and what to see. In writing so many travel books the danger is that one's writings will soon overlap—something that has here befallen Mr. Clark. We read about the Rhine steamer that operates between Basle and Rotterdam in "ATB in Holland," and we have the same story in this book about the other end of the route. Mr. Clark has covered the usual tourist haunts of Switzerland, a country less than half the size of Maine, showing in this book, at least, a distinct preference for the tiny pension accommodation over the luxury hotel. He is practical as all getout in matters of saving money, and there are lists of railway trains and mountain passes, items that might be covered by your travel agent. In the big cities Mr. Clark makes an effort at listing hotels and restaurants, a practice I wish he had continued in such large and complex resorts as St. Moritz and Lugano.

—H. S.

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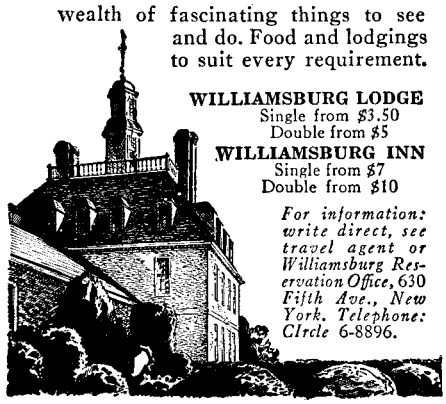

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AGATE & HIS NINE EGOS

(*Continued from page 19*)

verse judgments of others upon his own opinions and character, and then defends himself with toughness and vehemence. It is a fine spectacle in these tedious days of superficial fraternity. We cheer his hits as much as we envy his poise, and the result, contrary to the French maxim, is that the Ego is not hateful but lovable.

JAMES EVERSHED AGATE (which is to be pronounced Ay'gat) was born in Lancashire in 1877, an unwilling heir to the calico trade. His father was a mill owner, and James, the eldest of six children, stuck to the business for a good many years. But it was honestly that he came by his other aspirations: Manchester in the Eighties was a center not solely of cotton spinning but of art, especially music, and Agate's father took him to the Hallé Orchestra from the age of seven. Agate's mother, who had been reared in Heidelberg and Paris and had learned music on a piano once owned by Chopin, taught her son the instrument and made him a master of French.

Though he was over forty when his career took shape, James was the only one of a variously gifted family to achieve power—not merely the power of recognized authority but that of habitual command over his medium. Both kinds he undoubtedly owes to a trait that some may be inclined to call vulgarity. If this is correct, it is a vulgarity devoutly to be wished. Agate is content to be downright, full of knowledge, and underidable. His apparent complacency is simply strength. He likes Shakespeare with the same fervor and the same acute organs with which he likes wine and horses. He is at home in life and makes no bones about the best of life being meant for him. Nor is his love of literature a protection against a low opinion of himself. As late as 1920 he was keeping a shop in London, but his early acquaintance with genuine artists had given him the familiarity that breeds contempt of the parasite.

For this reason also he is free from the uneasy wish to foist "high" tastes upon others. Although he was the first English critic to take the movies seriously (in an article of 1921 on Charlie Chaplin), he rejects the common excuse for distorting great novels and plays on the screen: "Is it to popularize Shakespeare? But with me he is already popular." Agate steadily fights the high-brow attempts to ram culture down the throats of the people; he knows it can only bastardize culture and the people, too. Yet in this he is just the reverse of snobbish: he respects the ordinary man's desire for better pubs and cheaper boxing and vaudeville, and he recognizes their priority over a National Shakespeare Theatre.

But make no mistake: as the stir of this humane endeavor dies down you hear Agate inveighing against a great many things generally deemed democratic and popular, such as slovenly manners and the sham education that produces commonness. Of a young woman bred on modern literacy, movies, and crooners he says with certitude: "Explore her mind to its inmost crannies and you will find nothing there but curiosity about the latest hair dye."

Agate knows how much effort and steadiness are needed to develop even a marked bent toward intellectual occupations. By dint of hard work after business hours he forged a technique and style that he could rely on, and it is from experience that he draws his definition of a professional: "A man who can do his job when he doesn't feel like it."

Agate served seven years' apprenticeship on the *Manchester Guardian*, then after service in France until 1918 tackled London without influence and persuaded the *Saturday Review* to let him write its drama column. Two years later he had a call to the *Sunday Times*, and afterwards subdued *The Tatler* into accepting him as a movie critic and *The Daily Express* as book reviewer. For virtuosity's sake he took on the job of broadcasting theatrical comments for the BBC, and he wound up as literary consultant for British MGM.

None of this came easy. Agate may exclaim, "What fun words are!" but every play notice cost him blood. He goes at it four or five times, leaves the copy with his editor; then in the middle of dinner thinks of a better beginning or ending, rushes back to retrieve the proof—only to find that the editor (who boasts of being able, if required, to cut the Lord's Prayer) wants 300 words taken out. "Ego" reproduces several dozen of these short articles. They are without exception terse, free from stumbles in sense, and original in a way that one comes to think of as Agatian. As a test take this answer to a friend who had asked about Olivier's "King Lear":

> I thought Olivier began extraordinarily well, with just the right amount of testiness. A magnificent head, and everything royal about him. The whole subsequent performance brilliantly imagined and achieved. Mind working all the time and making one see things one had not previously noticed. For example, in the "loop'd and window'd raggedness" speech, at the line "O I have ta'en too little care of this!" one sensed an unclouding of the mind and a return to the responsibilities of kingship. Yes, any amount of subtlety and intellectual appeal. But was I moved? Not so much as I ought to have been. Was it because of the echoes of the same actor's Justice Shallow? And shouldn't Olivier, knowing he was going to tackle the big thing, have let the lesser one alone?
>
> . . . Do you want it in a nutshell? Wolfit's Lear is a ruined piece of na-

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MURDER STEPS OUT *Christopher Reeve* (Mill-Morrow: $2.50)	Sir Julian, well-bred cad, was unmourned by estranged wife, dependent nephew, or county neighbors, but all are entangled in jewel plot that tripped Sir Julian.	International crookery invades manorial stuffiness, gives everyone something to worry about, inspires a saving love in nick of time. Wow ending.	Good bed-book
THE KIND MAN *Helen Nielsen* (Ives Washburn: $2.50)	Marty Weaver knew his knife had killed two men near California beach—but had he murdered? His girl sure not—Chief Snyder uncertain.	Sensitive writing and treatment of characters weaves well with a Kafka-like dream state; denouement is clear and logical.	Top first performance—more please

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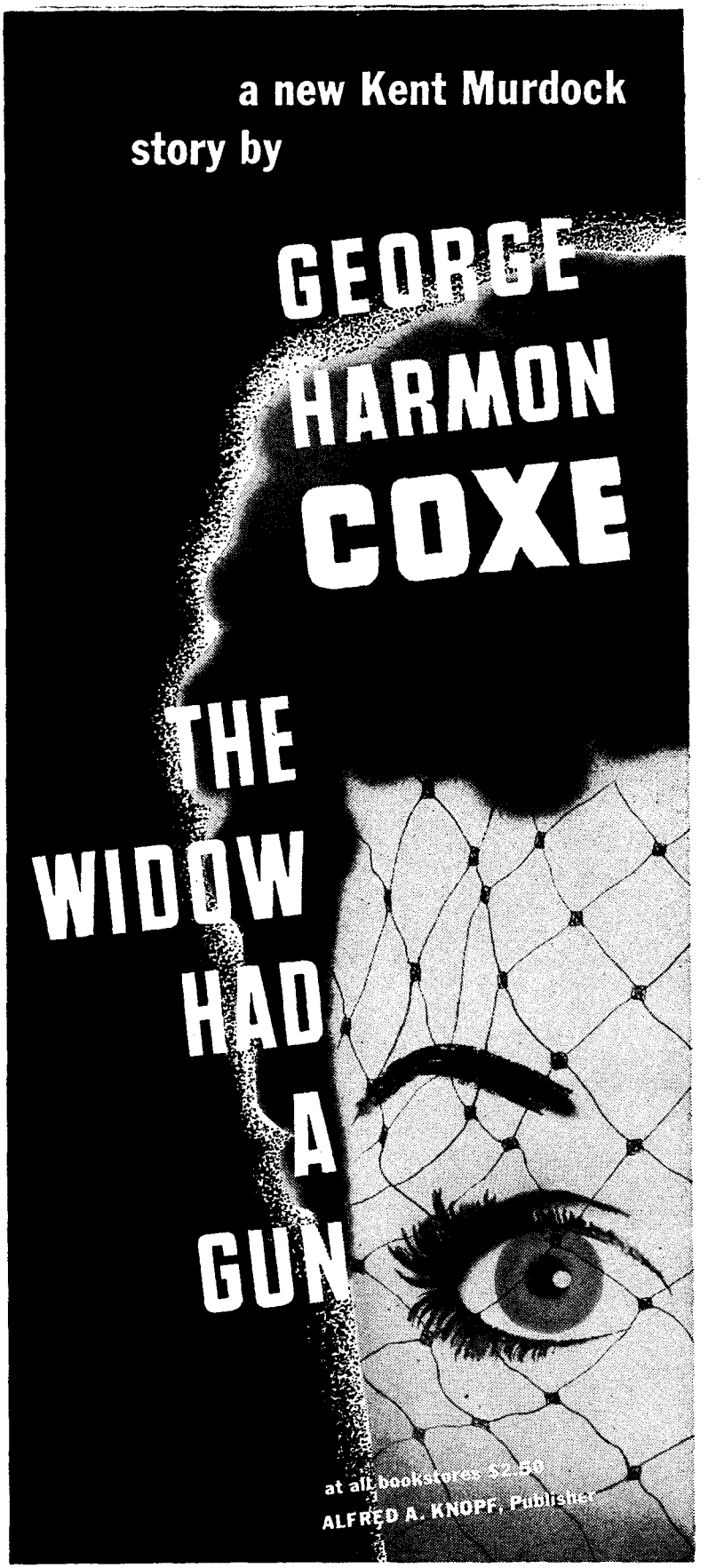
ture; Olivier's is a picture of ruins most cunningly presented.

Supply a couple of verbs in the opening sentences and this might be part of Agate's first-night review in the *Sunday Times*. His critical prose is perhaps not capable of conveying the highest originality or fineness of perception. It lacks the poetic contraction of Hazlitt, the sinewy embrace of Shaw; but, like Hazlitt and Shaw, it has tactical vigor and consecutiveness—Agate never maundered, never forgot that he was paid not simply to express but to *make up* his mind.

Besides the discovery of a formidable character a further reward of reading the 3,000 pages of "Ego" is the acquisition of a new set of friends. Agate gives us full delineations—often self-portraits—of the inimitable Scotsman Alan Dent, text editor of the "Henry V" and "Hamlet" films and dramatic critic of the London *News Chronicle;* of Leo Pavia, a cantankerous musician and wit; of George Lyttelton, an Eton scholar; of Montague Shearman, jurist and sportsman. And more than once we meet—among others—Noel Coward and Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Margot Asquith, Rebecca West, Mark Hambourg, Sybil Thorndike, Lord Alfred Douglas, Constant Lambert, Christopher Fry, Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier, George Moore, Maurice Baring, and Bernard Shaw.

Before we tire of the living we are transported backward into the company of Lamb and Dickens, Balzac and Shakespeare. Through Agate's early acquaintance with the far-flung Garcia family we draw on a whole century of bygone music and theatre; our diarist's delving into obscure corners of literature supplies the rest: he makes Kean, whom he never saw, as actual as Irving, whom he did see.

As these figures on different planes of existence enter, return, marry, become successful, or die and as Agate moves from one milieu to another one is forcibly reminded of Johnson and his circle. Agate Boswellized quite consciously. That is why "Ego" is so full of verbatim conversations, of luncheons, trips, and evenings at the Club. But although he takes both roles, Agate is more a Johnson than a Boswell. He and the great Doctor are linked by their unfaltering common sense and distinguished from their entourage by the speed and force with which they utter it. Take, for instance, the comments made by Agate's friends in 1940 about the continuance of "Ego": "'It means that you regard your Diary as more important than the war?' I said 'Well, isn't it? The war is vital, not important. . . . Because I am suddenly



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stricken with cancer, must cancer become my whole world? . . . Cancer has become vital to me, but not important; except in so far as I am a coward, it does not fill my mind.' " He concludes:

> In a hundred years, when my great toe began to ache and when it stopped aching will be of more interest to anybody coming fresh to this Diary than the peace terms. It will be news; they will be merely history.

Needless to say, the "Egos" tell us nothing of Agate's toes. We are given just enough about his health and spirits to feel a living body behind the sentences and to recognize other grounds of likeness to Johnson. Agate, burdened with asthma, loathed death, was subject to sudden causeless fears, and shared the neurotic compulsion to touch or count objects in a certain order. But apart from this what sanity and good humor! His favorite phrase is "Let us face it!" The words introduce no truisms but either a listing of his own shortcomings or else propositions one would not expect from so British a bloke. He reads anthropology and learns that man's brain has remained unchanged in 250,000 years. "Nonsense!" I do not believe that prehistoric man was the colossal idiot that his successor has demonstrably become."

For, in spite of the champagne and the wit and the love of life, Agate faces the truth of his own time and class. As Rebecca West rightly said in reviewing one of the "Egos," "the sense of doom beats behind the frivolity like a majestic theme in the bass." Like all good historians, Agate understood his time because he also lived by another clock. He belonged in heart to the high nineteenth century, from which he so aptly quoted, and it is by having a foot in each era that his stature as diarist transcends the accepted standard of the genre. To me he outranks Pepys—a fair parallel, even to the presence of a Great Fire of London at the center of each recorder's work. Agate himself would not have it so:

> *Total Stranger in* 1945: Do you hold yourself to be a first-rate diarist?
> *James Agate:* I most emphatically do.
> *T. S.:* To be ranked with Pepys?
> *J. A.:* To take my place beside Pepys.
> *T. S.:* Perhaps you think that, like Samuel, you ought to be Secretary to the Navy.
> *J. A.:* ——

But turn to "Ego" for Agate's answer.

This article will form the nucleus of Mr. Barzun's Introduction to the Crown edition of "The Later Ego."

FITZGERALD: THE DOUBLE MAN

(*Continued from page* 10)

forced to the conclusion "that I had done very little thinking, save within the problems of my craft. For twenty years a certain man had been my intellectual conscience. That man was Edmund Wilson." Another contemporary, Ernest Hemingway, "had been an artistic conscience to me. I had not imitated his infectious style, because my own style, such as it is, was formed before he published anything, but there was an awful pull toward him when I was on the spot."

Fitzgerald was making the confession in order to keep straight with himself, not to forestall any revelation that might have been made by his critics. The critics would have said that there was little of Wilson's influence perceptible in his stories and that there was still less of Hemingway's—although he once wrote a story about two dogs, "Shaggy's Morning," that is a delicate and deliberate burlesque of the Hemingway manner. By listening hard one can overhear a very few suggestions of Hemingway in the dialogue of other stories, especially the later ones, but Fitzgerald was faithful to his own vision of the world and his own way of expressing it. His debt to Wilson and Hemingway is real but hard to define. In spite of what he said, they didn't supply him with an artistic or intellectual conscience, since he had always possessed a lively conscience of his own; but they did serve as models of literary conduct by which he tested his moral attitude toward the problems of his craft.

To satisfy his conscience he kept trying to write not merely as well as he could, like an honest literary craftsman, but somehow better than he was able. There was more than one occasion when he actually surpassed himself—that is, when he so immersed himself in a subject that it carried him beyond his usual or natural capacities as demonstrated in the past. The writing of "The Great Gatsby" was among the first of these occasions. There are

scenes in the novel—Nick's first conversation with Daisy, the party at Gatsby's, Nick's farewell to Gatsby and his final meditations on the story—that are not only better than anything Fitzgerald had previously written but are not even foreshadowed in his earlier work. "I can never remember the times when I wrote anything," he said in his notebook—" 'This Side of Paradise' time or 'Beautiful and Damned' or 'Gatsby' time, for instance. Lived in story." By living in the story he became wiser, so it seemed, than he was in ordinary life. He said that sometimes he went back and read his own books for advice on his problems: "How much I know sometimes—how little at others," he added.

BY choice and fate he wrote what might be called the novel of centrality, that is, the novel dealing with representative young men and women in what seemed to be a central situation. The characters would not be hopeless people chained by their prejudices and at the mercy of social and economic forces—"creatures of their environment," in a favorite phrase of the naturalistic writers. Instead they would have talent and opportunities and at least an apparent freedom of movement, so that the decisions they made would have an effect not only on their own careers but on the lives of others, by giving examples to be shunned or followed: like himself his heroes would be exemplary.

The story, of whatever length, would be concerned with how they prospered in the world, how they fell in love, and how they made or failed to make an adjustment with life. It is the story that Stendahl told in "The Red and the Black" and Dickens in "Great Expectations": given a society with many false standards, how will a young man rise in it, by what advantages, what stratagems? Fitzgerald laid the story in his own time, and his social observation was certainly not much inferior to that of the masters.

I do not find it a serious flaw in his work that the heroes ended by resembling himself or that he gave most of them Irish names or at least (to Dick Diver of "Tender Is the Night") a "faint Irish melody" in the voice in order to make the identification stronger. Sometimes the heroes started as very different persons and were transformed imperceptibly, as he worked over them, into an image of the author. When his friend Bishop wrote him a critical letter about "The

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Great Gatsby" Fitzgerald answered, "Also you are right about Gatsby being blurred and patchy. I never at any one time saw him clear myself—for he started out as one man I knew and then changed into myself—the amalgam was never clear in my mind." Actually the book gains as well as loses by the blurredness of Gatsby; it gains in mystery what it loses in definition.

Dick Diver also started out as one man Fitzgerald knew "and then changed into myself" — changed so completely that Dick's fate was a prophecy of what would happen to the author; but again the change adds a new quality to the novel. Fitzgerald's personal life, enlarged as it was by his sympathies and his gift for putting himself in others' places, was more interesting than any lives he might have invented or merely observed; he had every reason for writing disguised autobiographies, as authors have done from the beginning. "There never was a good biography of a good novelist," he said in his notebook. "There couldn't be. He is too many people, if he's any good." What he meant was that the heroes of his stories were never himself as he was in life but himself as projected into different situations, such as might have been encountered by members of his spiritual family. "Books are like brothers," he said. "I am an only child. Gatsby my imaginary eldest brother, Amory [in "This Side of Paradise"] my younger, Anthony [in "The Beautiful and Damned"] my worry, Dick my comparatively good brother, but all of them far from home."

In life and art Fitzgerald set a high value on persistent effort. "After all, Max, I am a plodder," he said in one of his letters to Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner's. "One time I had a talk with Ernest Hemingway, and I told him, against all logic that was then current, that I was the tortoise and he was the hare, and that's the truth of the matter, that everything I have ever attained has been through long and persistent struggle while it is Ernest who has a touch of genius which enables him to bring off extraordinary things with facility. I have *no facility*." Plodding ahead with "Tender Is the Night" he wrote a manuscript of 400,000 words and put aside three-fourths of it, including a number of scenes that were as good as any in the finished novel. After the book was published and apparently forgotten he started revising it again, for a new edition that nobody had promised to bring out. It is scheduled to appear next fall, eleven years after the author's death.

"THE Last Tycoon" was planned as a short novel of 50,000 words and it was only half finished when Fitzgerald had his last heart attack, but his notes and drafts and synopses and character sketches make a great pile of manuscript and they are impressive reading in themselves. There are three drafts of the first chapter, and the third draft is an extremely effective piece of writing that struck into new territory for Fitzgerald. But he wrote at the head of the chapter, "Rewrite from mood. Has become stilted with rewriting. Don't look [at previous draft]. Rewrite from mood." On the fourth and the tenth revision he still would have been unsatisfied, unless the chapter fitted exactly to the outlines of his dream.

He devoted less care to his stories than to his novels, since he regarded himself as a novelist primarily. "Stories are best written in either one jump or three, according to length," he told his daughter. "The three-jump story should be done on three successive days, then a day or so for revise, and off she goes. This of course is an ideal—" and in his later years Fitzgerald seldom achieved it. There were stories that he kept revising for months or even years, but he never regarded them as his best. Writing stories paid him better than any other literary work. In 1929, for example, he earned $27,000 by his stories and only $5,450 from all other sources, including $31.77 described as "royalty from book." Books were, however, his first interest, and it was the novel, not the short story, that he described as "the strongest and supplest medium for conveying thought and emotion from one human being to another."

Yet he placed a fairly high valuation on his own stories as a group. Like other serious American writers he had the old and usually unsatisfied ambition to leave behind him a definitive body of work. There would be, so he planned, a uniform edition of his writings and in it the stories would

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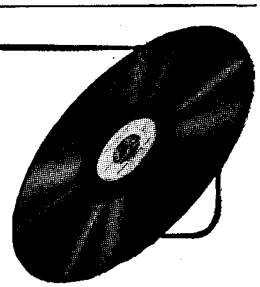

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occupy almost as much space as the novels. The "Collected Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald" would fill seventeen volumes. There would be seven novels, including three still to be written, and one of the unwritten novels, "In the Darkest Hour," would be in two volumes. There would also be seven volumes of short stories, one volume of poetry and plays, and a final volume of essays. Nor was this all; at the age of fifty-five or sixty Fitzgerald was to prepare a Revised Edition in twelve volumes—probably in dull, rich bindings like the New York Edition of Henry James—and once again the stories would be given their full place.

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Malcolm Cowley, editor and literary critic, edited "The Portable Hemingway," "The Portable Faulkner," and other books. His edition of "The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald" will be published March 5 by Scribner.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Anna L. Barbauld: "Life." 2. William Blake: "The Tiger." 3. George Herbert: "The Temple." 4. William Cowper: "My Mary." 5. Thomas L. Beddoes: "Dream-Pedlary." 6. Abraham Cowley: "Anacreontics." 7. Francis Thompson: "The Poppy." 8. Thomas Hood: "Spring It Is Cheery." 9. Ralph Hodgson: "Time, You Old Gypsy." 10. Robert Ingersoll: "Declaration of the Free." 11. Edwin Markham: "The Man with the Hoe." 12. John Keats: "To Autumn." 13. Robert Browning: "The Last Ride Together." 14. Sir Walter Raleigh: "Poem." 15. Eliza Cook: "The Old Arm-Chair." 16. Laurence Hope: "Kashmiri Song." 17. Charles Wolfe: "Go, Forget Me!" 18. Samuel Butler: "Hudibras." 19. William Morris: "An Apology." 20. Alexander Pope: "The Dying Christian to His Soul."

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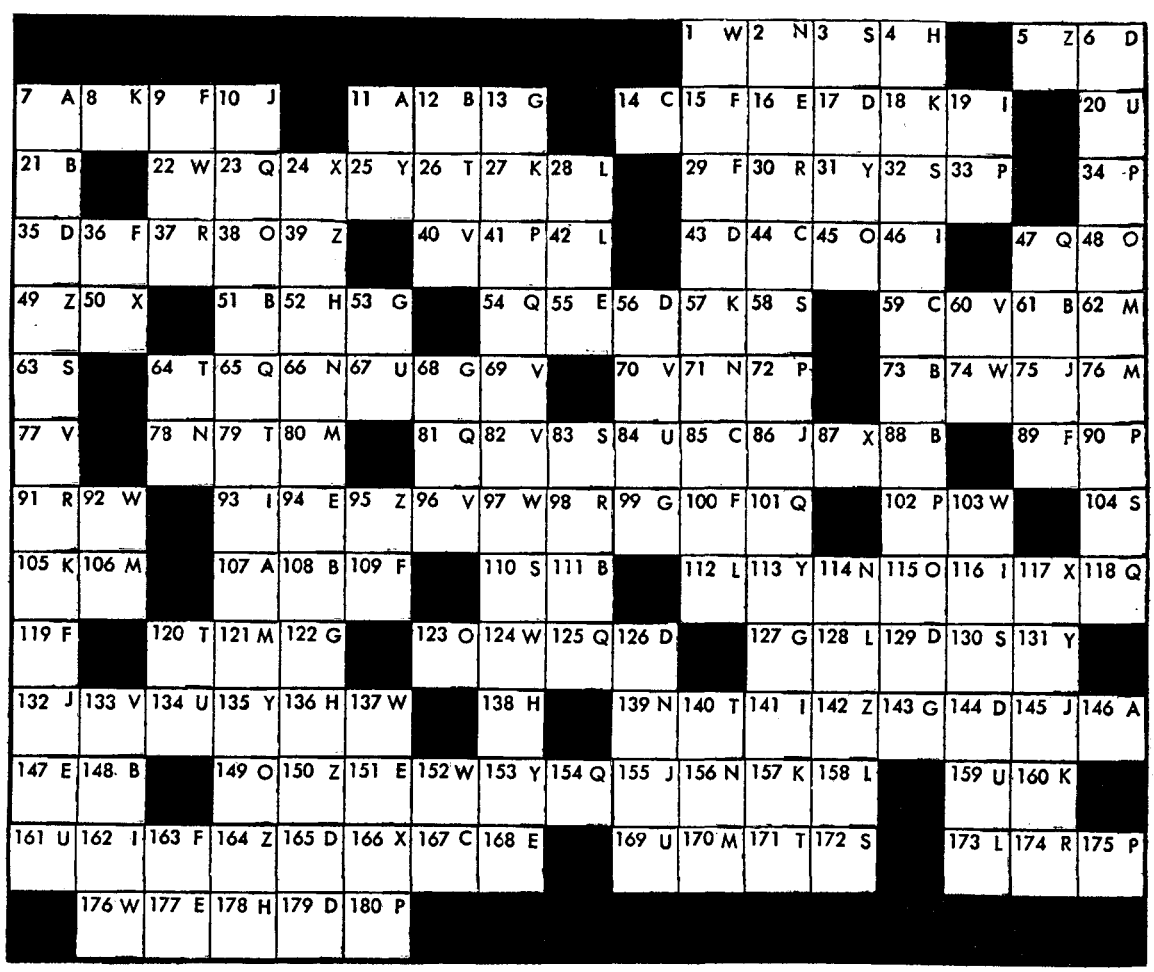
C. Cedric the Saxon's jester in "Ivanhoe".	59 44 14 85 167
D. Excessively full of delight.	6 17 35 129 43 165 126 144 56 179
E. An eastern maritime county in England.	147 94 16 151 55 168 177
F. English painter and illustrator of books for children (1846-1901).	119 163 9 100 29 36 89 15 109
G. Village in Essex, England, with a grammar school popular among Puritans, 17th century.	127 53 68 143 99 122 13
H. American painter and writer (1855-1914).	178 4 52 138 136
I. Trim; condition.	93 162 116 141 19 46
J. Title and heroine of a novel by George Du Maurier, 1894.	155 10 75 86 132 145
K. English writer and whimsical illustrator in America (1863-1935).	105 18 27 160 157 57 8
L. Second word of pseudonym of Washington Irving in England (See Word V).	112 42 173 28 128 158
M. Jewish teacher, leading authority of his day on Biblical law (fl. 30 B.C.-9 A.D.).	121 170 62 76 106 80
N. Biblical character from whom Mohammed claimed descent.	156 139 2 66 78 114 71
O. Lined with mother-of-pearl.	48 115 123 149 38 45
P. Combining oil and water colors (painting process introduced about 1780).	90 180 72 175 41 33 102 34
Q. Vertical rod or stand bearing a traffic signal.	47 81 125 118 154 54 65 23 101
R. American lawyer and writer of books on civil liberties, esp. censorship (1888-).	30 91 174 37 98
S. A range of Alps in Italy (English name).	63 110 172 83 130 3 104 32 58
T. Ready and eager (2 wds.; colloq.).	140 171 79 64 26 120
U. Tobacco, as used by the Indians of Virginia.	84 67 161 159 169 20 134
V. First name of pseudonym mentioned in Word L.	96 133 60 70 40 82 77 69
W. Ancient name for the narrow strait between Europe and Turkey-in-Asia.	74 92 124 152 137 176 22 97 103 1
X. To interweave.	24 50 117 166 87
Y. American lawyer and statesman, chief counsel for Pres. Johnson in impeachment trial.	153 31 135 113 25 131
Z. Ruffianly fellows.	95 49 5 39 142 150 164

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 43 of this issue.

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SRL / RECORDINGS SECTION

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—*Culver.*

Chaliapin as Boris—"the effort toward restoration is welcome."

Silver Threads Among the Golden Age

IRVING KOLODIN

ACCORDING to durable proverb, silence is golden—but not nearly so much as some of the noise now being made about what is called "the Golden Age." In settling upon it as a catch phrase with which to aggrandize some worthwhile revivals from its staggering catalogue RCA Victor has relinquished admiration for an honest, welcome effort by exploiting a half-truth that neither makes friends nor influences people. Whether it even attracts customers otherwise not interested in this merchandise, I doubt.

By mere primacy among manufacturers and possession of immense resources the sequence of industrial entities now known as RCA Victor commands power unchallenged in its field. But by ignoring the subsurface push of that power and relying instead on superficial catch-penny devices RCA Victor has paradoxically reduced itself to the level of any other firm able to afford *only* catch-penny devices. I think of a record bearing early examples of the art of De Luca that a new company has just published. Having noticed that inflation has penetrated artistic as well as monetary values this company, with impressive presumption, calls itself "Golden Age Recordings."

In pleading its case RCA Victor's "Treasury of Immortal Performances" —the adjective, apparently, going with contractual agreement—argues both sides of the issue. Those who assert that musical value, intrinsic interest, and historic importance can be combined to produce a record truly indicative of a particular period can find unshakable evidence in the compilation of recordings arranged as a ten-inch LP under the appropriate, succinct, and accurate title "Chaliapin as Boris." Inasmuch as no one expects the impossible, variations in recorded technique may be borne with tolerance when we profit again from the eloquence and power of such a performer in a role unquestionably his own. The effort toward restoration is welcome, the good will unmistakable. Here is a salient instance of turning the LP process to good artistic and economic ends.

Using this as RCA Victor's self-established measurement of worth the other issues of the initial dozen or so measure up only occasionally. A disc labeled simply "Wagner," for which I had the pleasure of writing a commentary, is representative in some material, questionable in other, and puzzling in arrangement. Surely it would have been possible to manage the sequence so that the two monologues of Hans Sachs from "Die Meistersinger," as sung by Friedrich Schorr, would have followed each other rather than occupy opposite sides of the disc. Then, too, the inclusion of an isolated, unresolved part of Lotte Lehmann's Sieglinde characterization makes little sense when the whole first act of the "Walküre" performance from which it is taken should be transferred to an LP. The incidental attention to Schumann-Heink and Gadski, Rethberg and Leider is both welcome and appropriate.

Here we have a couple of clear paths, self-charted, indicative of the direction such a venture could reasonably take: an arrangement by per-

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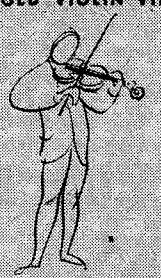

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—Culver.

—Culver.

Ponselle, Kreisler, Farrar—"these are not refrigerators being forced upon unwilling Eskimos."

former, with all the excerpts taken from a single work; or an arrangement by composer, with all the performers, in some measure, of interest to a buyer interested in a single one. But that, apparently, is a concept too simple for those responsible for the other issues. These include over-all groupings into types of music (ensembles, duets, "light music"), types of voices, types of types in which good and bad, worthy and specious are mixed together with no regard for anything but name-dropping.

The collection called "Composer's Favorite Interpretations" has some relationship to possibility, for it includes as composers Puccini, Verdi, Charpentier, and Strauss, and as performers Maria Jeritza, Francesco Tamagno, Mary Garden, Edward Johnson, and Lotte Lehmann. Yet here, too, it does not seem that any reasonable logic has been applied to the arrangement of material, with Jeritza's "Vissi d'arte" prefacing Lehmann's singing of some "Rosenkavalier" excerpts, and Tamagno's "Death of Otello"—dim-sounding, to a piano accompaniment—following in puzzling sequence.

So far, however, we have been dealing with matters in which choice or option, opinion or evaluation have a considerable part. None of these considerations can be admitted in defense of the LP's numbered 1003 and 1006, labeled "Golden Age Ensembles" and "The Golden Age at the Metropolitan." The first includes Marcel Journet at one extreme of time, Ezio Pinza and Lauritz Melchior at another; the second is bounded by Emma Calvé (a version of the "Habanera" from "Carmen," recorded in 1907) and Rosa Ponselle singing "Ernani involami" from Verdi's "Ernani" (recorded in 1928).

The simple fact, of course, is that little of this represents any part of a "Golden Age" recognized by history, granting all the specious and unspecific connotations of that term. I will even go so far as to weaken my own case by pointing out that a critic of the Nineties—when, it is agreed, the last measurable "Golden Age" of singing occurred — conceded that for the elderly of his time the "Golden Age" was the era of Mario and Rubini, decades before.

But it is one thing to observe a historical truth, another thing to distort it for commercial advantage. The "Golden Age" as it has a period and meaning at the Metropolitan stretches from the late Eighties, when Lilli Lehmann arrived on the scene, to about 1907-08, when Marcella Sembrich and Emma Eames—as well as the De Reszkes and Plançon—had departed it. Henry T. Finck, veteran critic of the *New York Evening Post*, wrote a volume of memoirs titled "My Adventures in the Golden Age of Music," which appeared a month after he died in 1926. He certainly wasn't referring to Melchior, Pinza, Telva, or Galli-Curci.

As the "Golden Age" had a meaning and validity for the Metropolitan it took in such singers as the De Reszkes, Victor Maurel, Pol Plançon, Ernest Van Dyck, Francesco Tamagno, Mario Ancona, Campanari, Saleza, Salignac, Van Rooy, Bispham, Lassalle, and—latterly—Scotti among the men; Lilli Lehmann, Emma Eames, Nellie Melba, Lillian Nordica, Maria Brema, Marcella Sembrich, Eugenia Mantelli, Milka Ternina, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, and Emma Calvé among the women. I leave it to the reader to decide whether a single Calvé excerpt justifies calling a record "The Golden Age at the Metropolitan," or whether a single ensemble with Scotti fulfils expectations of "Golden Age Ensembles." I further dispute the propriety of the sponsor and selector of the series, George Marek, belittling the real "Golden Age" in terms of Calvé's "Habanera," which he recently spoke of as being sung like a "torch song." Marek should know that by 1907 every reputable critic considered Calvé a caricature of the fine singer acclaimed at her American debut in 1893. Moreover, it strikes me as duplicity to steal the thunder of the "Golden Age" designation on the one hand, and to say, on the other, that it really wasn't so good anyway.

WHAT made the "Golden Age" golden, as anyone who bothers to investigate can find out, was the range and variety these singers commanded, the ease and purity of their singing method, the extent to which they penetrated character and situation, their conception of opera as an art rather than a diversion between concerts. I know one can find passages in Shaw scoffing at the De Reszkes in one role or another, but also consider his evaluation of Maurel or Calvé (in her unspoiled prime) or Van Dyck. You will find there a discussion of character portrayal, of vocal coloration, of acting design, and textual emphasis that few of those in the RCA "Golden Age"— as distinguished from Finck's—knew anything about.

The obsession throughout this series of revivals seems to be adjectival—"Magic Strings," for a discordant grouping of Mischa Elman playing "Zigeunerweisen" as encore to Casals playing Bach (the Kreisler excerpts are probably the most strikingly personal performances of all); "Genius at the Keyboard," for Paderewski playing a Chopin *morceau* awkwardly plus his own "Menuet" and Debussy's "Reflets dans l'Eau," with a Pachmann excerpt, a brief session with Serge Prokofiev (a group of his "Visions Fugitives,") and a Bach Prelude and Fugue performed on the organ by Albert Schweitzer in incongruous "balance"; more gold with "Golden Duets,"

(*Continued on page* 63)

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John Alden Carpenter

HOWARD HANSON

IN JOINING the musical world to honor John Alden Carpenter (born February 28, 1876) it would be easy to write extensively of the life and career of this unusually gifted composer. I am sure, however, that Mr. Carpenter would prefer to have his music speak for him, for he is a true creative artist whose music voices his thoughts, his emotions, his philosophy of life, and voices them eloquently.

The decade of the Seventies was particularly generous in its production of gifted composers, each distinguished in his own way. The versatile Frederick Converse and the gallant and picturesque Henry Hadley, the gifted Rubin Goldmark, Daniel Gregory Mason, one of the few composers to carry on successfully the tradition of romantic-classicism in America, Henry Eichheim, of the fascinating excursions in exotic tone color, the great tonal individualist Charles Ives, and the exciting "young" radical Carl Ruggles—all, like Carpenter, spring from this productive decade.

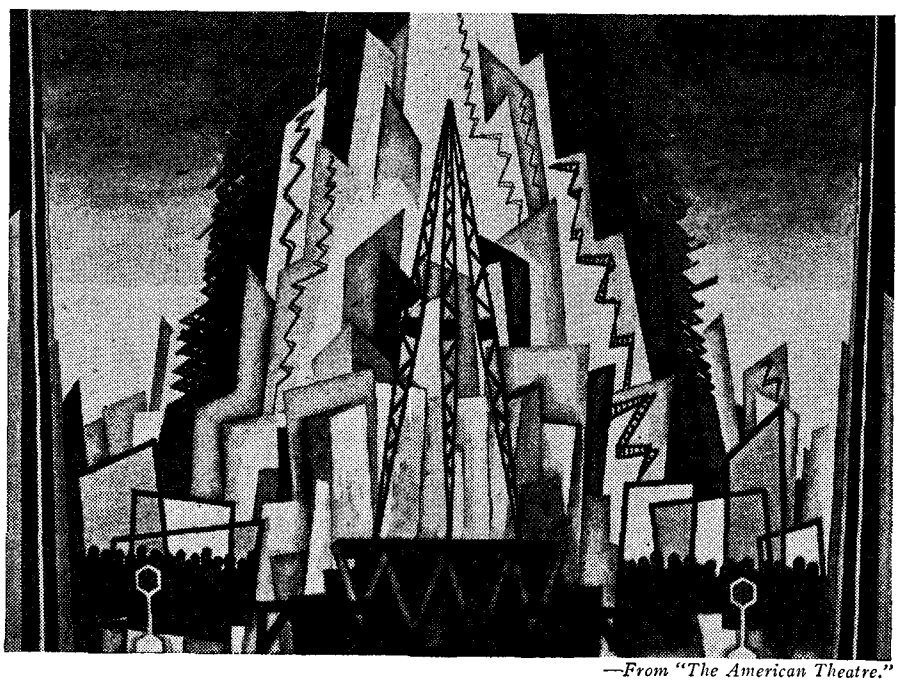
Among this distinguished list after seventy-five years the name of John Alden Carpenter ranks high. His music has been particularly successful in finding favor with conductors, performers, and critics, in communicating its message effectively to that very important part of the musical populace, the listener. This latter statement is a matter of history, for few American composers of symphonic music have been so widely played. His suite "Adventures in a Perambulator," first performed in the season of 1914-15 in Chicago, has been played by virtually every major orchestra in the United States. The ballet "Skyscrapers," after its first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1926, has equaled the earlier suite in its wide appeal. The "Concertino for Piano and Orchestra," the suite "Birthday of the Infanta," the ballet "Krazy Kat," the Violin Concerto, the First Symphony, "Sermon in Stones," and the tone poem "Sea Drift," though not so popular as his two most famous works have also been widely played. Outside of the orchestral field his songs, particularly the "Gitanjali," have enriched the American repertory.

It is always difficult to describe in words the music of any composer and particularly difficult in the case of a composer like Carpenter, whose creative personality is so many-sided, complex, and subtle. He will be remembered in history for several important contributions. He was one of the first American composers, like the earlier George Chadwick and Henry F. Gilbert, to break successfully with the German tradition which was so powerful at the time of his birth, a tradition which simultaneously nourished and smothered its disciples. He was one of the very first Americans to bring to American music a subtlety and delicacy of expression which had been up to that time generally lacking. (This has been referred to at times as the "French influence," but this is too facile an explanation.) He continued the excursion into the expression of humor in music, already begun by Chadwick in a work such as "Tam-O-Shanter," but in a way which was entirely individual. Finally, though primarily a melodist and colorist, he has remained an interested experimenter in rhythmic techniques.

I have conducted on various occasions all but one of the symphonic works mentioned, many of them repeatedly. However, I must limit my comments to three, each of which illustrates certain facets of Carpenter's creative gifts. The suite "Adventures in a Perambulator" is the story of a baby's exciting excursion with her nurse. We see through the baby's eyes the big, burly, awe-inspiring policeman, we hear the delightful sounds of the tinkling hurdy-gurdy, we are lulled by the lapping of the water of the lake on the shore, and deliciously frightened by the barking of the noisy but friendly dogs, after which we go home to our nap and peaceful dreams. All this is portrayed with a fascinating delicacy of imagination, revealed not only in orchestration but in subtleties of modulation, impressionistic devices, and the like.

"Skyscrapers" is also highly descriptive, but in consonance with its subject it is rugged, frequently noisy music, highly rhythmic, and impelling. This is music of the city, raucous, jazzy, witty, dramatic, but always underlined with that sense of humanity which is never absent from this composer's works.

My favorite of all of Carpenter's scores, however, is his symphonic poem "Sea Drift" on the poems of Walt Whitman. Here Carpenter reveals not only his descriptive powers, of which we are well aware, but an emotional depth of which we had not always been conscious. From the somber introduction it moves inexorably to the epilogue. It tells no story but is rather the embodiment in sound of the mood of the poems. The score is filled with the most poignant use of dissonance, and yet the score does not sound dissonant. Page after page contains examples of this masterly use of the vocabulary of sound. What sensitive listener who heard it will ever forget that translucent sound at the end where muted horns, low strings, and vibraphone combine the sonorities of four keys with such delicate beauty that one strains one's



—From "The American Theatre."

Robert Edmond Jones's sketch for the ballet "Skyscrapers" —"music of the city, raucous, jazzy, witty, dramatic."

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powers of hearing to prolong the sheer ecstasy of the sound. Carpenter's "Sea" may be less sunny and less brilliant than Debussy's, but it is also more profound, more tragic, and more mysterious. This is great music by any standards, music which measures up fully to the great poetry which gave it inspiration. In this new age when the young composer is slowly emerging from the chaos of the era of the multiple wrong-note technique may he study this score! He will discover when the wrong note becomes the right note. Above all, this music will convince him that sound can be beautiful.

This great work, written about eighteen years ago, is not yet recorded, since Carpenter is, of course, an American. Will not one of our great recording companies make us a beautiful birthday present of such a recording? We would all be grateful.

Howard Hanson, composer and author, is director of the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N. Y.

LP and Its Sponsor

Ordinarily changes in the upper echelons of recording companies have little direct relation to the consumer of such products. However, the recent retirement of Edward Wallerstein from Columbia Records calls for a word of thanks and good wishes to him from all those who have benefited from his pioneering of the long playing record.

In light of later happenings it is worth noting, as Wallerstein did in a recent conversation, that his first taste of long-playing experiments was as an executive of RCA Victor in the mid-Thirties. It was his charge to make the "Concert Record" introduced by RCA *circa* 1931 work, or wind up the program someway. After considerable research an engineer named Fred Barton advised Wallerstein that the answer to the whole problem was a one-mil groove. With the heavy pickups then in use and the rarity of durable styli, this was scarcely practicable. However, when Wallerstein became president of Columbia in 1939 he instituted the use of long-playing acetates for recording —thus providing the backlog for Columbia's pre-tape LP's—and established the research program from which the microgroove emerged. So, in wishing Wallerstein well, we pass along his reminiscence of Engineer Barton and hope that he is within reach of these words. —I. K.

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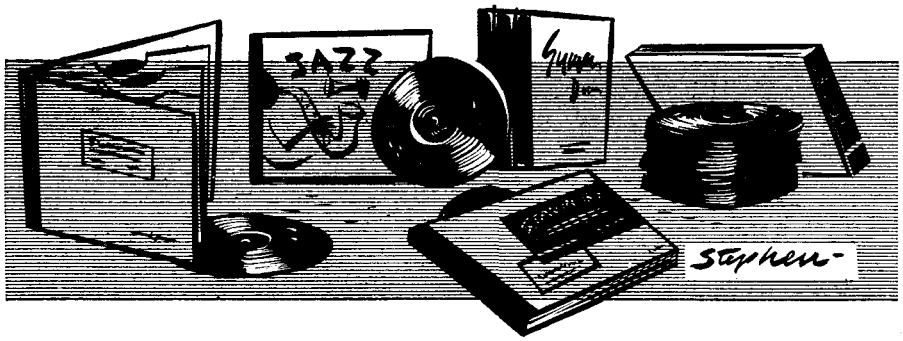

A Second Speaker

C. G. BURKE

ANYONE who writes anything about the phonograph becomes a physician to some of his readers. He cannot cure their phonomania and will not try; but he can prescribe treatment tending to shorten intervals of exaltation and depression, productive of longer periods of somewhat deeper satisfaction. He can, in short, offer sober advice to readers distressed by flaws in the quality of sound reproduced by their phonographs. Almost any sound system can be improved if there is no monetary obstacle; but since this obstacle is disagreeably common it is comforting to know that some of the most striking improvements, some of the most valuable additions to the quality of phonographic sound involve expenditures comparatively very small.

Unluckily many phonomaniacs insist upon a panacea. There is none; but an addition can be made to *any* home sound-system not already employing it which will effect an astonishing improvement regardless of the quality of the existing system. It is the installation of a speaker or speakers to supplement the one already in use. It is not a cure-all; it is an improvement. It does not correct deficiencies; it imposes values necessarily lacking where a single speaker is used.

One almost dares to say that the quality of the added speaker does not matter, since its quality is of less importance than its placement. It is best to say that any speaker with a response not detrimental in itself will add greatly to the effect of a sound-system whose original speaker is satisfactory to its owner. A speaker of pretty modest characteristics will serve—say one with a reasonably even response between 80 and 8000 cycles—and well-made speakers of modest characteristics are available in many makes at modest prices. Naturally, better results are to be expected from a fine speaker than from a mediocre one; but a system using in concert a fine speaker and a mediocre one will be definitely superior to the system using the fine speaker alone; and two mediocre speakers properly placed sound much better than one.

The location of a second speaker in relation to the first and to the room in which music is to be heard is of first importance, and in order to facilitate discovery of the best place and at the same time keep the problem mechanical rather than electrical it is prudent to choose a speaker of the same rated impedance and output as those of the first speaker. Discrepancy in impedances causes a proportionate discrepancy in the amount of power delivered from the amplifier to the two speakers. Thus if one 8-ohm and one 16-ohm speaker were correctly connected in parallel to the amplifier the output of the first would be twice that of the second, and in many cases this would be detrimental to the optimum effect obtainable by a multiple speaker-system properly located. It can be added that in some installations unequal outputs from different speakers may be highly effective, but the experimentation for proper location involved is a long and fretful process.

In its simplest application connection "in parallel" means that individual speakers are connected directly by their own individual double-wired cable from their own individual terminals to the prescribed terminals of the output transformer of the amplifier. Here a warning is imperative: the correct impedance of the combined speaker system—which will not be the same as that of either individual speaker—*must* be matched as nearly as possible to the impedance of the output transformer. Most good amplifiers have a series of output taps which permit pretty close matching to any desired combination of speakers; but if an amplifier lacks such an output transformer a proper transformer must be added to the amplifier. Persons not familiar with the laws governing impedances should not themselves attempt the wiring of additional speakers and should entrust such work only to technicians to whom Ohm's law is also God's.

The best acoustical values can be obtained by considering the better speaker (if the two are different) as number one; but since one speaker may be very heavy or already installed in a cumbersome receptacle housing also radio and/or television it may be labor-saving to consider the bulky speaker as number one. This may injure slightly the ultimate sound but will mollify the physique and temper of whoever moves the furniture.

Speaker number one should be placed in a corner if possible where it aims its sound with a minimum of dispersion at a point convenient and comfortable for listeners. Rooms differ and speakers differ. Furnishings differ and listeners differ; the interaction of these factors will determine the location of speaker number one.

Speaker number two, which we hope is easily mobile, may then be placed. A negative and a positive dictum should always govern the placement of a second speaker: never put it diametrically opposite the first; always place it at a distance from the listener considerably greater or less than the distance between listener and speaker number one.

BECAUSE of the laggard speed of sound this difference in distance causes a time-lag between the respective impacts of the two speakers on the listening ear, which actually hears a sound superimposed upon an identical sound. The ear cannot at the distances available in even very commodious rooms detect the time-lag but it does react with pleasure to the stereosonic tonal roundness the time-lag makes.

The second speaker may be higher or lower than the first. It might be tilted up or directed down. It might be in a corner; it might be elsewhere. It could be placed aiming at right angles from the first or at an acute angle. In general the further from each other the speakers are, as long as they are at sharply different distances from the preferred point of listening, the more effective they will sound; but the size, shape, and appointments of the room must, naturally, largely dictate their placement.

A multiple speaker-system (for three, four, and five can be an improvement over two if the enclosure

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permits their installation) is advantageous proportionately to the size and complexity of the recorded musical group. Its effectiveness diminishes as the musical group shrinks toward unity, but a string quartet heard through several speakers is rounder, smoother, and more *actual* than the same recorded quartet heard from one speaker only. In a very large room, where one speaker is much further from the listener than the other, the human voice may suffer some slight loss in intelligibility; but few people have rooms of such a size, and an additional speaker or two would restore the intelligibility lost.

Plural speakers installed as suggested here compensate for certain necessary disadvantages in the recording art and disadvantages inherent in concert halls when these are very large or when the listener is improperly placed to hear music in the concert hall. Multiple speakers, in effect, envelop and bathe the listener in sound. This is the bath a conductor gets. Few can share it at actual performance. Recording engineers most often try to put on discs what the conductor hears, and at their discretion modify this in varying measure by some of the acoustical properties of the hall. This is good practice (when reverberation is not added as a supplemental choir) but creates for the listener at home with a single speaker a curious acoustical conflict.

The large symphony orchestra, the cast of an opera, choral organizations perform dispersed over an extensive area. The members are not equidistant from the conductor or from the audience. Their chords are richer because the chords' components are scattered over five thousand square feet. Assume that a recording engineer captures this somewhat better than the conductor can (microphones having a greater ubiquity) and we reproduce through our single speaker the captured sound. We are confronted with the acoustical limitations of our quarters, and with the emanation from a hole, usually about eleven inches in diameter, of an audible texture originally woven on a vast stage. We have a tiny discernible compressive point of origin. We cannot play at a volume sufficient to produce proper reverberation from our walls; and although the discs have an imprint of the reverberation of Carnegie Hall this recorded reverberation is not pervasive, but is removed and aloof, squeezed out of a small hole.

A second speaker, a third, perhaps a fourth, swells our private auditorium with a heady scent of sound, proceeding not from a little hole but from all the corners of our own immediate musical universe.

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HOLIDAY

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"Dons," "Kings," and a "Daughter"

THE APPEARANCE of the Haydn Society's "Don Giovanni" brings with it high hopes of a quality accomplishment to match its "Idomoneo" of last fall, also some secondary considerations induced by the expressed intention of RCA Victor to issue its Glyndebourne version in LP during the current year. Weighing one thing with another, the immediate impression is that a long playing Busch-conducted "Giovanni" will still be this listener's preference, even though fifteen years, at least, have elapsed since the original was made.

Since many Mozartians have long been desirous of access to *any* decent "Don Giovanni" (neither conventional nor unconventional issues of the Glyndebourne version now being accessible) it will be well to begin with the Haydn Society edition (LP set 2030, $23.80) and evaluate it for itself before citing comparisons. We have on the credit side firm, straightforward leadership by Hans Swarowsky, excellent orchestral playing by the Vienna Symphony, and a consistently interesting if vocally frayed Giovanni by Mariano Stabile, well and favorably known for his phonographic Falstaff as well as other things, a strong Elvira by Hilde Konetzni, a good Zerlina by Hedda Heusser, competent performances of Masetto by Alfred Poell and of Leporello by Alois Pernerstorfer, and a passable Ottavio by Herbert Handt. Gertrude Grob-Prandl is definitely a trial as Donna Anna, singing with pinched tone and lack of assurance in the more difficult moments.

Considering the variability of these elements, the impulse and definition of Swarowsky's performance are well maintained, especially after the first side, in which Grob-Prandl, Handt, Stabile, and Pernerstorfer show their limitations rather than strengths. When the other characters and chorus are introduced and the ensembles come to life under Swarowsky's painstaking direction, we savor much of the depth and richness of this score. If we are let down by Stabile's struggle to get out "Finch' han dal vino" or "Serenade," by Handt's graceful but insecure "Il Mio Tesoro," or Grob-Handl's "Non mi dir," we can only recall the storm warnings displayed on side one. For all the incidental scholarship involved, the use of a harpsichord, the hewing to the line of the original Prague version (without "Dalla sua pace" or "In quali eccessi," written later for Vienna and included here on a supplementary side) we are grateful; but the blemishes remain.

Reverting for comparison to the Busch-Glyndebourne—which I had not happened to hear for many months—the ear is impressed immediately by the strength of the recording, as well as by the character and discipline of the performance. As a groove-by-groove comparison with the new edition emphasizes, quality results in recording are as much a matter of balance and microphoning as of mere frequency range—and these

attributes the older "Giovanni" possesses in classic measure. Where the new Vienna version conveys a brightness (sometimes a sharpness) of sound favorable to particular instruments, the older English one retains a rounded purity not easily to be surpassed. Moreover, Ina Souez is a splendid Donna Anna—measured by the dozen or so others we have heard in the interim—, Brownlee a fluently well-spoken Don, Baccaloni (of this date) a fine Leporello, Koloman Pataky a better singer as Ottavio than any performer on the new set, and Luise Helletsgruber (Elvira) first class. Together they comprise under Busch an ensemble of excelling subtlety, whose integration is a more secure, purposeful thing than today's offering from Vienna.

The summary would go this way: those who are impatient for a "Giovanni" and have none will find the Haydn Society issue good value, if nothing more. Those who have the Busch but crave LP convenience should wait on RCA Victor's promise. It can hardly be worse than the original—which is still better than this new one—and might be impressively better.

Hardly less interesting are the two latest contributions from Cetra-Soria: first times, no less, of two standard repertory works. In substance and lack of previous recorded history Montemezzi's "L'Amore dei Tre Re" (Cetra-Soria LP set 1212, $11.90) takes precedence over Donizetti's "Figlia del Reggimento" (Cetra-Soria LP set 1213, $11.90), though the values of performance are weighted the other way. The dominant asset of this "L'Amore" is conductor Arturo Basile, a man of knowledge and temperament, who delivers a vividly dramatic treatment of the sumptuous orchestral score. Of the singers one is truly distinguished: Sesto Bruscantini, whose Archibaldo is a true figure of tragedy. The others—Clara Petrella as Fiora, Renato Capecchi as Manfredo, and Amadeo Berdini, a light-voiced Avito—are all capable, though each has an occasionally rough passage in a performance that would have benefited from retakes at several points.

However, it *is* a performance; and one which makes the blood and muscle of this unique score more palpable than any performances heard locally since those in which Grace Moore took part. Basile drives the rhythm insistently, with a sense of orchestral color and verbal emphasis which gives meaning to Sem Benelli's eloquent text even when the singers are remiss. At its best this score rises to an eloquence rarely heard since Wagner, and the powerful, well-modulated recording makes a recommendation mandatory, if somewhat qualified. Certainly it should be welcome wherever a lively interest in the good, unhackneyed repertory exists.

NO such hesitation accompanies a recommendation of the Donizetti score, which has the expectable excellence of Lina Pagliughi's singing of Maria and Mario Rossi's conducting, an accomplishment on the level of his "Falstaff." Not quite so expectable is the liquid flow of Cesare Valletti's tenor voice in the music of Tonio, which he sings not only with ease but also with charm, no small accomplishment in this fairly foolish part. The versatile Bruscantini is the thoroughly practised Sulpizio (to follow the designations of the Italian text), and Rina Corsi an accomplished Marchesa. All the contributory elements—orchestra, chorus, and reproduction—are properly provided for, to a result of consistent interest and commendable sound.

What is more, the interest is dramatico-theatrical as well as musical. As these Italian operatic endeavors multiply it is increasingly evident that a good share of attention is expended to make them credible as well as listenable—as one can detect from Pagliughi's skilful effort to paint the situation as well as sing the notes, the attention to detail in bringing the chorus on and off the stage, etc. Robert Bagar's new English text is more a paraphrase than translation, with no attempt to duplicate rhymes and meters. It is, in any case, intelligible.

—I. K.

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Bach and Brahms, for Organ

PERHAPS because the Bach bicentennial has made us more aware of the "royal instrument," perhaps because recording company executives are beginning to see something in the organ besides theme music for soap operas the last twelvemonth brought a greater number of organ recordings than ever before. Some are completely new issues, some merely reissues of what has already been done. The bulk is Bach, but there is one noteworthy exception: the Brahms Chorale-Preludes, Opus 122. Contemporary music for the organ—and there is more of that than many of us suspect—is represented in a single disc, the Poulenc Concerto.

As a baseball fan can tell you personnel and performance data of major league teams, most organists know the idiosyncrasies of major pipe organs both in this country and abroad. Probably there is not an organ in America that commands the interest of musicians as does the instrument built for the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, just east of Times Square on 46th Street, in New York City. When it was installed in the late Thirties it was a tonal shock to all accustomed to the "soupy" sound of the typical church organ. It was an experiment, the first of what we have come to call the "baroque"-style pipe organs. Allowing for the comparatively small quantity of organ music on records, it is odd that this pioneer Aeolian-Skinner instrument has never appeared on commercial recordings until the present release of the Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor (Mercury LP 15032, $4), and the Brahms Chorale-Preludes (Mercury LP 10070, $5).

Ernest White, the organist, has for years been musical director at St. Mary's. With Ernest Linzel and Marie Schumacher as associates he has built a superb choir and established a standard of excellence in the performance of liturgical music, extending from Victoria and Cabezon to Messiaen. In 1937 Dr. White and G. Donald Harrison, president of Aeolian-Skinner, drew up plans for an organ along classic lines that would be ideally suited to the playing of music from the classic and pre-classic periods. Happily, the instrument at St. Mary's is not limited to this musical field, as anyone can testify who has heard Franck performed there.

With his interpretation of the C minor Passacaglia and Fugue Dr. White brings to six the number of organ recordings of this set of twenty variations plus fugue. Looking over the six, one finds a considerable lack of agreement as to the way the music should sound. Ernest White was a pupil of Lynnwood Farnham, the meticulous perfectionist of the late Twenties. Perfectionism is White's goal, too. He establishes a tempo and keeps that tempo, drawing on a solid technique to support an inflexible pace, scorning the blandishments of a romantic rubato. White's playing is respectful, well-planned, and as accurate as an adding machine. It doesn't indulge in the whim of volume expression by means of swell shutters because that luxury wasn't available to Bach. Rather, White, in common with Weinrich, Marchal, and the purists generally, achieves his aim by adding ranks of pipes at points along the road. This takes no little planning in a work of the stature of the Passacaglia, for without forethought an organist might well find himself using all available ranks and needing more.

One criticism pertinent to this recording is that the mid-section is inclined to be mushy and lacks some of the brilliance we expect to hear. More particularly, it doesn't sound like the organ at St. Mary's. The reverse side

(*Continued on page* 59)

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LONDON
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BELA BARTOK:
CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA
Max Rostal, Violin, with The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent
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For 2 Violins, Viola, 'Cello, Bass and 2 Horns
Members of The Vienna Octet
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BACH:
SUITE NO. 2 IN B MINOR FOR FLUTE SOLO, STRINGS AND CLAVECIN
The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger
Soloists: Andre Pepin, Flute; Doris Rossiaud, Harpsichord
LPS.313—$4.95
A SCHUMANN RECITAL
Sonata No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 22
Novelette in D Major, Op. 21, No. 2
Romance in F Sharp Major, Op. 28, No. 2
Novelette in F Sharp Minor, Op. 21, No. 8
Kathleen Long, Piano
LLP.188—$5.95
ROSSINI - RESPIGHI:
LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE—(Complete Ballet)
Ernest Ansermet conducting The London Symphony Orchestra
LLP.274—$5.95
SONATAS BY SCARLATTI
Sonatas in G Major (L.129), C Sharp Minor (L.256), D Major (L.14), F Major (L.119), A Major (L.45), B Flat Major (L.46), D Major (L.265), G Major (L.209)
Kathleen Long, Piano
LPS.314—$4.95
WILLIAM BYRD:
MASS FOR FOUR VOICES
The Fleet Street Choir conducted by T. B. Lawrence
LPS.301—$4.95
PURCELL:
MASQUE in "TIMON OF ATHENS"
THOMAS ARNE (arr. Woodhouse):
THOMAS AND SALLY
The Intimate Opera Company
LLP.292—$5.95
BLISS:
STRING QUARTET NO. 2 IN F MINOR
The Griller String Quartet
LPS.299—$4.95
STRAVINSKY:
LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS (The Rite of Spring)
Ernest Ansermet conducting L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande
LLP.303—$5.95

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Recordings in Review

"Fledermaus" No. 3

STRAUSS: *"Die Fledermaus." Eugene Ormandy conducting the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus, with Richard Tucker, Ljuba Welitch, John Brownlee, Charles Kullmann, Martha Lipton, and Lily Pons.* (Columbia LP set 108, $11.90.)

WHAT didn't seem possible, reasonable, or even desirable six months ago has finally come to pass—three versions, of one sort or another, of Johann Strauss's greatest work. What emerges, finally, are three well-defined treatments, in which London has the Vienna atmosphere, superb orchestral playing, fine singing, and the original text; Columbia has the Metropolitan atmosphere, fine orchestral playing, good singing, and the text used in this generative production; and RCA Victor has an abridgment of no special atmosphere, fine orchestral playing, variable singing, and a text not related to anything in particular.

As an abridgment, then, the RCA version stands alone; but London has already processed a series of "Highlights" and there is no reason to doubt that Columbia will also. Considering the two American treatments as having some elements in common, I would say that the only thing beneficial to the Columbia version that RCA could contribute would be Patrice Munsel, for Adele, and possibly Fritz Reiner as conductor. Otherwise, it packs more cards, carries the greater impact, develops more mood, and — in the final analysis — pleasure than the other recent version in English.

A special virtue of the Columbia recording — which, as recording, is about the richest, most robust and satisfactory that has been produced on 30th Street—is its preservation of the brightness and life of the production directed by Ormandy. These qualities are apparent in the Overture, in the treatment of the background music (more orchestra would often be desirable), in a general purposefulness engendered by a performance related to something that happened in a theatre. As for the English text, it means nothing at all as sung by Welitch or Pons. Kirsten as Rosalinda would have contributed more to the recording than Welitch and Munsel than Pons. Considering the ironic fact that Martha Lipton, as Orlofsky, sings "Chacun à son gout" much better than Stevens or Jarmila Novona did at the Metropolitan, or Sieglinde Wagner does on the London disc, the relationship of a name to a result is not always direct. This accomplishment should direct toward Miss Lipton some esteem lately lacking.

As final mention, I might say that somebody comparing the Metropolitan's previous recordings — "Hansel and Gretel," "Bohème," and "Butterfly"—with this "Fledermaus" would have a strong idea that something or somebody had happened to the company in the time between them. Chances are most people have heard it's Rudolf Bing.

Ansermet's "Sacre"

STRAVINSKY: *"Le Sacre du Printemps." Ernest Ansermet conducting l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.* (London LP 303, $5.95.)

YEARLY, it appears, when the London engineers choose to measure the progress they have made in their art during the past twelvemonth, they turn to a work of Stravinsky, preferably with Ansermet conducting, as a yardstick. This time they have chosen to challenge a memorable 78-rpm accomplishment of their own—Eduard van Beinum's performance of the same work with the Concertgebouw Orchestra—with the added hazards imposed by LP. Since I don't live in Carnegie Hall, I haven't been able to evaluate the full impact of this recording. In terms of an oversized living room, however, this is more of "Le Sacre" than has ever been heard before from a disc.

That relates both to the amount of sound and its poetic discipline. It is imperative to draw a vector, so to speak, between them, to chart correctly the direction in which Ansermet is pointing. I admire greatly Van Beinum's musical conception of this score, as I do also Monteux's persuasively dramatic one. (The recordings of Stravinsky and Stokowski are enlightening in their different ways, but both, I would say, are overpersonalized—in vastly different styles.) Ansermet's, I feel, is the most relaxed, subtle, and intently differentiated we have had. The poetic impulse is evident from the beginning, and eloquently maintained to the end. If it doesn't attain the heights of primordial energy proclaimed by some others, it sets the score firmly in the line of earlier and later Stravinsky as a musical texture. Clearly audible are the fantasy of "Petrouchka" and the block-construction of "Les Noces," in very much the way the past and future must have worked upon Stravinsky as he composed this score.

—*Ben Greenhaus.*

Lily Pons, Martha Lipton, Eugene Ormandy—"something or somebody had happened to the company."

Quartet by Verdi

VERDI: *Quartet in E minor. Paganini Quartet.* (RCA Victor LP 37, $4.67.)

LONG known as an oddity, little known as a reality, this by-product of a two-weeks' delay in the Naples premiere of "Aida" (1873) is a work of constant delight and unceasing interest. It was written, as the above phrase indicates, during a lapse in rehearsals that Verdi was attending, and represents less a scholarly exercise in canons and counterpoints than a lively experiment with the kind of string writing that was destined to have so large a place in "Falstaff." The aria-type melody makes a frequent appearance, as well as the aria-type accompaniment; but the freshness and verve of the writing are persuasive, whatever the technique employed. Neither the Prisca nor the Roma Quartet's version has been available for comparison with this, but we doubt that either can match the suave precision of the Paganini's or its razor-sharp reproduction.

"Dream" from Berlin

MENDELSSOHN: *"A Midsummer Night's Dream." Ferenc Fricsay conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, with chorus and soloists.* (Decca LP 8516, $5.)

THOUGH there is much here that meets the ear, there is even more that meets the eye: namely, the appearance of a contemporary Berlin Philharmonic recording on LP—moreover, at domestic prices. Investigation

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reveals two things: that the quality of the sound is first class by all considerations; that the acquisition by Decca (the American entity, of course) of rights to the Deutsche Grammophon catalogue promises a source of major merchandise, both new and historic.

In this instance we are impressed by the auguries even more than the accomplishments. Fricsay is a wholly able conductor, but he is no match for the kind of sorcery Toscanini accomplished in RCA Victor 1280, with the NBC Orchestra. (There is also a Vox version by Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Symphony, which has not yet reached me.) It is well to have such tidbits as the "March of the Fairies," the setting of "You spotted snakes," and the "Dance of the Clowns," but the total of Mendelssohn in the Toscanini remains qualitatively greater, if numerically less. We may mention, incidentally, that this Berlin Philharmonic performance, as many others recently recorded in Germany, was done directly on tape.

Eight by Boyce

BOYCE: *Eight Symphonies. The Zimbler Sinfonietta.* (Decca LP set, 105, $10.)

THE ONLY cause for regret in this issue is that Max Goberman, who "discovered" the works (so far as the phonograph is concerned) did not have the opportunity to rediscover them for LP. However, that regret is sentimental rather than musical. The performance by Josef Zimbler and his ensemble of Boston Symphony players is both animated and refined, with the kind of musicianship that has given the group (on the basis of but a limited few issues of Mozart, Hindemith, etc.) a well-defined place among recording ensembles.

It is rather striking, on hearing these works anew, to realize the strength and individuality they possess. Much music generally contemporaneous with Boyce has come to hearing since the Goberman version appeared about ten years ago, but the sense of something new and captivating then conveyed is not at all diminished. Those who are hearing them for the first time will, I am sure, not question details of scoring; others, to whom they are familiar, will hear some new effects. These appear in the parts owned by the British Museum, but were not included in the edition of Constant Lambert used by Goberman.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

Mozart on the Piano

IF I reverse proper chronology and begin this survey of recently issued Mozart piano concertos with the "Coronation" (K.537), it is because of sympathy for the underdog. Enthusiasm for this work is currently in short supply. Though brilliance and grace are allowed it, a murmur of discontent pervades almost all commentary. Doubtless the concerto's genesis in the year 1788 has much to do with this; more has been expected than polish and *savoir faire* from a work that jostles "Don Giovanni" and the E flat Symphony in Köchel's catalogue. But if unfulfilled expectation accounts for some of the disaffection, more can be laid to deficiencies of interpretation, specifically to the disinclination of most contemporary performers to fill out the bare structure of Mozart's writing.

"Nobody doubts the necessity of ornaments," wrote Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach in 1759. "They are quite indispensable. *They connect the notes* and give life to them." Fifty years later Dr. Burney recorded: "An adagio in a solo is generally little more than an outline left to the performer's abilities to color. . . . If not highly embellished [it] soon excites languor and disgust in the hearers." That the good doctor knew whereof he spoke is evident from this recent criticism of the "Coronation" Concerto's Larghetto: "Here . . . is a pleasant little tune, but when . . . we come to the ninth repetition we wish we had end seats." Such "languor and disgust" must surely arise from hearing the movement played exactly as it appears in the Urtext. Once properly ornamented, Mozart's "Coronation" Concerto turns into a work of fascinating invention, as Wanda Landowska proved in her treasurable prewar recording. Conrad Hansen, who has recorded the "Coronation" with the German Opera House Orchestra (Berlin) under Arthur Rother (Capitol LP 8109, $5), does not see fit to fill out Mozart's sketchy notation, and the result is a shadowy affair with a declining quotient of interest.

Andor Foldes plays the B flat Concerto (K.450) in a manner to suggest that he has taken to heart Mendelssohn's dictum "Get over the ground quickly." That this mercurial approach is the most satisfying I would hesitate to say. Yet effective it is, and though it does not illuminate neither does it violate the music. The efficient Foldes technique does not boggle at the chromatics of Mozart's cadenza, and he is ably supported by Eugène Bigot and the Lamoureux Orchestra of Paris (Vox LP 6580, $5.95).

The Concerto in G major (K.453) is one of those masterpieces of sunny poetry that cause idolaters to rave about Mozart's "Heaven-sent melodies." Whether one is most attracted to the emphatic argument of the opening Allegro, to the poignantly questing Andante and its suggestion of "Et incarnatus est," or to the folk-song variations of the final movement with its delicious concluding presto in true opera-buffa style, here is a work of airy enchantment. Given a performance of accuracy and style the G major Concerto speaks for itself. Gaby Casadesus and the Pro Musical Orchestra under Bigot (Vox LP 6720, $5.95) more than fill these requirements.

For the kind of playing that kindles music into an experience more meaningful than one had believed possible, in short for genuine interpretive genius, I turn to the playing of Clara Haskil in the F major (K.459) and D minor (K.466) concertos (Westminster LP 50-54, $5.95). Miss Haskil, a woman of Swiss-Rumanian background now in her fifties, is one of the least publicized and one of the most profound artists in Europe today. She has a way with phrasing that at its best reaches the level of Casals. Sinuous, pliant, yielding, a phrase to Miss Haskil is not a matter for reproduction but an act of re-creation. Though she can play fast, she never skims. And her range of tone is extraordinary. Skeptics are adjured to listen merely to bars 40 to 68 of the second movement Romanza from K.466; this inspired snatch will more than convince.

Of the two concertos on the Westminster disc I prefer the F major, if only because in this the Winterthur Symphony, Henry Swoboda conducting, shows up less disadvantageously. For the unfortunate fact must be reported that Haskil's great performances are impeded by orchestral playing of mediocre tone, wayward precision, and capricious tempos. Lili Kraus has been accorded far better support by Enrique Jorda and the Pro Musica Orchestra, but in other respects her recording of the D minor Concerto (Vox LP 6290, $5.95) disappoints. Miss Kraus's playing is erratic to an extreme. Moments there are of insight and beauty, but these are overbalanced by other passages where she almost achieves the formidable result of making Mozart sound ugly.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's and Albums

See page 64 for Pop Roundup

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Arriaga: Quartets Nos. 1 and 2. Guilet String Quartet. Concert Hall LP 1068, $5.95.	Here is a real find in chamber music: two absorbing works by the Spanish-born Juan Cristosomo Arriaga, a junior contemporary of Beethoven, born in 1806, died in 1826. These richly imagined, beautifully executed works are attributed to his sixteenth year, but would do honor to almost any man we know. Slashing, incisive playing by the Guilet ensemble, first-class reproduction.
Bach: Suite in B minor. The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger, with André Pepin, flute. London LP 313, $4.95.	Between the brilliant but uncertain Casals and the mercurial but now outmoded Reiner LP, this version has a happy totality of virtues: fine choice of tempos, a good relation of solo instrument to ripieno, excellent definition of all elements in the texture. Doris Rossiaud is the harpsichordist.
Beethoven: Sonata in A flat, Opus 26. Walter Gieseking, piano. Columbia LP 4334, $5.45.	A welcome issue of one of the greatest among Beethoven's early sonatas, finely played by Gieseking save for some fussy accentuations. Overside Gieseking musters all his legendary mastery for five brief works by Grieg, including a superb "Wedding at Troldhaugen," "Butterflies," and "To Spring." The LP sound is not as good as the original English 78 rpms.
Byrd: "Mass for Four Voices." Fleet Street Choir conducted by T. B. Lawrence. London LP 301, $4.95.	A fascinating counterpart to the "Mass for Five Voices" by Byrd, previously recorded by the same ensemble for London (K 1058/60). A more robust style of performance than one commonly encounters in this genre, beautifully supervised by Lawrence. Splendid sound.
Haydn: Symphony in D (104). Charles Munch conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor LP 49, $4.67.	The one among the twelve Salomon (or London) symphonies officially called "London," and thus of famous beauty, opulent dimensions, and absorbing expressiveness. Munch's attention to these attributes is something close to superficial, as is the quality of tone he allows the strings to apply in the faster movements. Needless to say, it is far better in all mechanical details than the Dressel-Bavarian Radio Orchestra version on Mercury.
Mozart: Divertimento in D (No. 17, K. 334). Willi Boskovsky, etc. London LP 235, $5.95.	Were this not a month crowded with commanding miscellany of all sorts, one might easily extol at paragraphs' length the art and felicity of this much-loved work, now available for the first time in a version other than the Lener-Brain of old. Boskovsky is as tasteful and thoughtful a violinist for the important leadership part as one could ask, his associates from the Vienna Octet of high repute. Lovely sound all around.
Purcell, etc: "Westminster" Suite. E. Power Biggs, organ. Columbia LP 4331, $5.45.	Purcell is only one of nine composers represented on this disc, but with four works he has a numerical dominance. Included are his "Bell Symphony", two "Trumpet Tunes," and a Voluntary on the Doxology. Overside oddities include Mozart's "Adagio for Glass Harmonica." Excellent reproduction of both organs used (Symphony Hall for Purcell, etc., St. Paul's Chapel for the miscellany).
Rossini: "Boutique Fantasque." Ernest Ansermet conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. London LP 274, $5.95.	Respighi's deft recreation for the orchestra of a dozen piano pieces utilized by Massine for his gay ballet of 1919, and still to be heard with pleasure. The Ansermet treatment is all point and incisiveness, realizing the basic spirit of Rossini, the lively color sense of Respighi, and the imagery of Massine. A worthy successor to the long-admired version by Eugene Goossens, which lacked several episodes that this one includes. Dazzling reproduction of a very good performance.
Scarlatti: Eight Sonatas. Kathleen Long, piano. London LP 314, $4.95.	In the light cast by Ralph Kirkpatrick's harpsichord playing of nine similar works in a Concert Hall release last month, this is less acute comprehension, less precise execution. Of the eight sonatas, five have not been previously recordeds: Nos. 14, 45, 46, 119, and 265 (Longo catalogue). Those duplicated, and by whom, are No. 129 (Pessl), No. 209 (Horowitz), and 256 (Landowska, in the Scarlatti Society volume). Beautifully clear reproduction of the Long piano sound.
Schubert: Sonata in B flat, 1828. Webster Aitken, piano. EMS LP 112, $5.95.	Though all the books say so, it is hard to believe that this is the first recording in general circulation of so great a work as this since the generally inadequate one of Ernst Victor Wolff a decade ago. Aitken transcends all previous accomplishments with the depth of his understanding and the surety of his projection. I could do with more tonal warmth at some points, but this is a minor quibble amid so much major worth. Robert Blake sustains his reputation as a recordist with the just evenness of sound that is heard, though my pressing was noisier than need be.
Schubert: Fantasy in F minor, Opus 103. Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus, pianists. Westminster LP 50-47, $5.95.	Another major work of the Schubert piano literature, this one for four hands at one piano. Wholly sympathetic playing by Badura-Skoda and Demus, in a repertory which could well absorb their efforts for some time to come. Overside are two rondos (in D and A) and the "Marche Caracteristique" (Opus 121, No. 1). Fine reproduction of the spacious piano sound.
Schumann: Sonata in G minor; two "Novelettes," etc. Kathleen Long, piano. London LP 188, $5.95.	Long is better gaited for the slower, more intimate aspects of Schumann than she is for such a movement as the sonata opening with its "So rasch wie möglich" designation. On the whole rather pale (temperamentally), monochromatic (tonally) performances which invite rather than discourage competition. The "Novelettes" are from Opus 21 (D major, No. 2, and F sharp minor, No. 8) and in both instances too much for her finger skill. Also included is the "Romance" (Opus 28).
Strauss: "Der Rosenkavalier" Suite. Antal Dorati conducting the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. RCA Victor LP 48, $4.67.	Fine booming sound out of the Academy of Music, where this everything-but-name Philadelphia Orchestra is heard in resonant playing of an arrangement by Dorati of various melodic high-spots from the score. I don't like the noisy ending or Dorati's anything-but-subtle command of the virtuoso ensemble. Plenty of credit for it, however, and RCA's technicians.
Wagner: "Parsifal" excerpts. Hans Knappertsbusch conducting the Vienna Philharmonic, and Gunther Treptow, tenor. London LP 287, $4.95.	Rather slow-paced treatment of the "Prelude," "Transformation Scene," and "Flower Maidens' Scene," with Treptow, now of the Metropolitan, a clear but rather strained voice for Parsifal. In all little to tempt one from the Toscanini "Prelude" save richer sound, and even that unwinds over-deliberately.
Viotti: Concerto in A minor (No. 22). Peter Rybar, violin, with the Winterthur Symphony conducted by Clemens Dahinden. Westminster LP 50-49, $5.95.	Violinists will require no introduction either to Viotti or Pietro Nardini, whose E minor concerto fills the portion of the second side not used by Viotti. Agreeable music in both instances, though not of timeless importance. Rybar plays both with sensitivity and fine violinistic style. All the other elements are similarly good. —Irving Kolodin.

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ORGAN

(*Continued from page 55*)

of this Mercury LP, the F major Pastorale, fills the bill much better in this respect. The illusion of the uncased instrument, with row upon row of bare pipes visible high in the back of the church, is fully there. To my mind the Pastorale is one of the best —and most interesting—organ recordings ever released.

But the Passacaglia leaves a little to be desired, and one might wish that it could be done over. To my taste the performance of this same work by André Marchal on the organ of St. Eustache, Paris (Anthologie Sonore 136/7), is the best combination of playing excellence and excitement. Fritz Heitmann, organist of the Dom in Berlin, who has been on a concert tour of the United States during the past few months, recorded it some time ago for Telefunken, and it has been re-released as Capitol LP L-8105. More romantic in concept than the others, his interpretation is also inclined to be just a little heavy handed.

Interesting for comparison is E. Power Biggs's recording of the Passacaglia in Victor album 1048, for the organ on which it was made is also an Aeolian-Skinner of Harrison design. Built for the Memorial Chapel on the Harvard University campus, it has little more than family resemblance tonally to the instrument in St. Mary the Virgin. Listeners often find that Biggs is apt to favor upper registers in striving to avoid muddiness of diapason tone on the pedal. The effort is praiseworthy, but sometimes carried a little too far.

Carl Weinrich, many will recall, also recorded this Bach masterpiece some years ago for Musicraft. Surfaces and general recording quality are none too good. The instrument is the Praetorius organ at the Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey, which is rather similar to the organ of what used to be called the Germanic Museum at Harvard. It is austere and perhaps a bit too limited in size for a work of this stature.

One other recording of the Passacaglia has been released in recent months by HMV. The performance is by Geraint Jones, who plays for the record in the Steinkirche, near Hamburg. The instrument is one actually built during Bach's time. This is no guarantee of excellence, but the organ does possess a beautiful clarity of tone in the inner voices.

Choosing among the six available recordings resolves itself to a matter of individual taste. Between the two LP's White's reading is cleaner and more direct in approach, though Heitmann is more exciting. The Heitmann disc is coupled with an extremely effective performance of the chorale, "Herzlich Tut Mich Verlangen," and the D minor Toccata and Fugue.

Ernest White is to be heard in another Mercury LP, released concurrently with the Passacaglia. Far removed in style and period, it shows off the instrument of St. Mary's to a far greater degree than the Bach, drawing much more extensively on its palette of tone color. Aside from the sheer effectiveness of the sound, however, this second White recording is interesting for its presentation of virtually Brahms's total output for the organ. With the exception of a Prelude and Fugue, and a Fugue, and possibly a few short pieces written about 1850 these eleven Chorale Preludes (Mercury LP 10070, $5.) are everything Brahms contributed to pipe-organ literature. As landmarks in nineteenth-century organ composition they may very well stand side by side with the giant chorales of Cesar Franck and the sonatas of Mendelssohn, yet they are not in the least grandiose. This is an important record for Brahms lovers; it is earnestly recommended to these collectors who have no or few organ records in their libraries.

—David Hebb.

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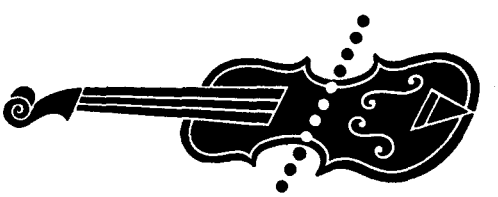

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London Gets a Concert Hall

THOMAS HEINITZ

LONDON.

Lady Bracknell: "The *un*fashionable side! I thought there was something. However, that could easily be altered."
John Worthing: "Do you mean the fashion, or the side?"
Lady B.: "Both, if necessary, I presume."

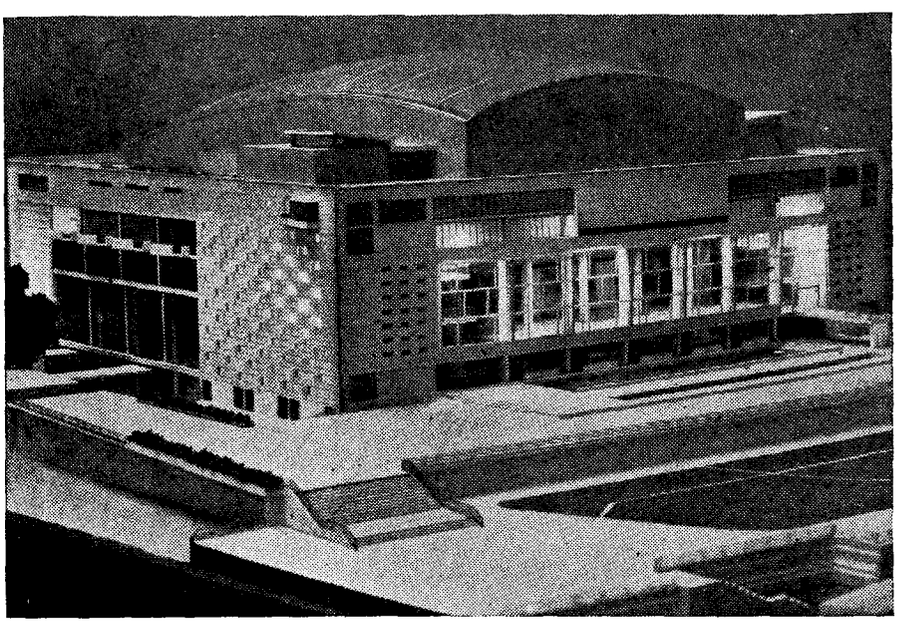
FOR ONCE the customary title of my report shall have a double meaning, because I intend to devote a large proportion of my space to London's own OTHER SIDE, the "unfashionable" South Bank of the Thames, where at this moment hundreds of men are engaged in putting the finishing touches to the Royal Festival Hall. Despite the spiritual presence of Shakespeare and his original Globe Theatre (at Southwark) and the more concrete existence of the famous Old Vic close to Waterloo Station, this South Bank has in the past enjoyed the cultural status of a poor relation; even the Old Vic only attained its international reputation when the company bearing its name had temporarily established itself across the river, in the New Theatre. Now at one stroke the London County Council means to alter both the fashion and the side.

When German bombs destroyed the Queen's Hall ten years ago London lost its main home of orchestral music. Only he who has sat in the vast space of the Royal Albert Hall, where a concert may be heard twice for the cost of one ticket (or else an orchestra sounds as if seen through the wrong end of a telescope), can realize what this loss meant to our musical life. Since the war ended there has, of course, been much talk of rebuilding the old hall, and at one time an attempt was made to raise money by public subscription for a Henry Wood Memorial Hall, but it was left to the London County Council to take positive action. The Council's plan for the redevelopment of the much-bombed South Bank of the Thames (a long-term project) had included a municipal concert hall, and in view of this the Government asked the Council if it could build such a hall in time for the Festival of Britain, which was to be held there in 1951. Thus it came about that in October 1949 the foundation stone for the new concert hall was "well and truly laid" by the Prime Minister. On May 4 Arturo Toscanini is scheduled to direct the first public concert to be held in it.

No event of comparable importance to London musical life has occurred during the last decade, a period that has seen the gradual emergence of a new generation of music lovers, a generation greater in numbers and in enthusiasm than any before it. It is for this youthful body of enthusiasts that the hall has largely been planned, and the intention has been to provide not merely a worthy concert hall but a center for all the arts. When the Festival of Britain is over a small theatre and an art gallery will be added; drama, ballet, films, and sculpture are all to have their place.

The accompanying illustration shows a model of the Royal Festival Hall as it will appear when viewed from Waterloo Bridge. In the words of the general manager, John Shove: "The aim of the designers has been to create a concert hall to which the whole of Europe will look as an outstanding example of contemporary architecture, and incorporating the latest advances in the field of acoustics." The actual hall, as can be seen from the picture, is a separate entity within the main building and it may be said to "float" in the middle of the surrounding structure. The internal shape most closely resembles that of the Kleinhans Music Hall in Buffalo. The whole of the seating is steeply raked to give direct sound and vision lines. The level of the first violin desks is only very slightly above that of the front seats, and between platform and audience is an area of slate designed to strengthen the high frequencies. When complete the hall will be "tuned" by the use of different types of internal finishing. Planned for an orchestra of 110 players and a choir of 250 voices, the hall will accommodate an audience of rather less than 3,000, or up to 3,500 if there is no choir and the standing room is filled.

A few weeks ago I was able to go over this remarkable building and see the work in progress for myself. Except for the final decoration, the seats, and fittings, the concert hall itself was already complete. It was an exciting experience to enter for the first time what promises to be the finest home London music has ever had. One can hardly judge the acoustics of any hall by the sound of the workmen's hammering, yet the overwhelming feeling I carried away with me was that this building is functional in the best sense of the word. For once nothing seems to have been forgotten: the comfort of player and listener has been lavishly catered to; there are spacious, soundproofed artists rooms; a magnificent foyer (the largest in London); wide promenades and staircases with splendid vistas across the river; a fine restaurant on two floors; an underground garage. Wiring for broadcasting, television, and recording has been included; it is confidently expected that leading gramophone companies will in time make extensive use of the hall for orchestral recording. The tip-up seating has been so designed that, by means of absorbent material on the bottom of each seat, the hall will sound much the same empty or full.



Royal Festival Hall (a model)—"what promises to be the finest home London music has ever had."

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Spotlight on the Moderns

WHEN the tricky idea came to Milhaud to write two quartets that could be played both separately and simultaneously as an octet (Columbia LP 4332, $5.45) it is very probable he had never heard of the analogous exploits of a forgotten early nineteenth-century Italian, Pietro Raimondi, with whom he also shares his productivity. The enormity of Raimondi's output, wrote the historian Fétis, was enough to give one a headache just to contemplate. It included sixty-two operas and a welter of choruses and fugues, among them six fugues in four-parts that could be played all at once to make twenty-four parts. When four hundred performers joined to synchronize three of his oratorios into one he was so moved by the massive effect and the acclaim that he fainted.

No such aftermath attended the performances of Milhaud's octet when two quartets, on each occasion, after playing in succession both came on the platform to play the same music at once. By his own and other new music Milhaud has become hardened to the combining of instruments that blithely go their own way, almost as if they were playing different works together. But if Milhaud's *tour-de-force* should strike anyone as mild next to Raimondi's, let us not forget modern dissonance and asymmetry. Also, each quartet has the general character of any other Milhaud quartet (and also the charm and litheness), and makes little concession, so far as I can see, to the special problem. One is in no sense just an accompaniment to the other. Separately, as you may hear them on the same LP, each one keeps all the instruments active most of the time, and their fusion is thus often an undifferentiated, hectic blob of sound.

The ideal performance may soften this verdict. The present rendition is a stunt rather than an artistic accomplishment. The Budapest Quartet added its own *tour-de-force* to Milhaud's by playing the octet itself. After recording one quartet it performed the other while listening to a play-back of its own previous recording. A time-beater helped the men keep their place. But a conductor to bring out the main line, more than just a time-beater, is what is needed. Taken individually as quartets, I find the first movements far better than the rest and very satisfying to hear.

It is odd to turn from Milhaud, who writes frankly in keys, and find a soothing antidote in the relatively liberated chromaticism of Berg's "Lyric Suite." Its great delicacy of texture is something Milhaud has shown himself at his best capable of attaining, though in very different terms. Not, however, in his octet. Berg's gossamer effects, the breadth of the sixth movement, and many other ingenuities are beautifully deployed by the Juilliard Quartet (Columbia LP 2148, $4).

Also for four strings is the Second Quartet of Arthur Bliss, completed last summer (London LP 299, $4.95). I have never been an admirer of this English composer, but I must acknowledge some strong inspirations and effective writing in this work. The Griller Quartet's vital playing helps a lot, and also the circumstance that Bliss had no brasses to muddy the background. Apart from some Brahmsian developments and saccharine slow passages it represents its composer at the height of his powers.

The London recording of Bartók's Violin Concerto (LP 302, $5.95) is better in many ways than the familiar domestic one. Max Rostal has the needed gypsy temperament and the London Symphony, led by Malcolm Sargent, sounds very well, with the one reservation that it seems to be too far in the background. No doubt this work was contrived as a real virtuoso piece for Zoltan Szekely, who commissioned it. Long episodes are as rhapsodic as those of Glazounov, for the mere exploitation of the singing capacities of the violin. But as always Bartók's genius shines through, as in the final variations and the last part of the cadenza of the first movement.

A recorded program of flute music (Columbia LP 4339, $5.45) is distinguished by the beautiful playing of William Kincaid. I prefer Rampal's performance of the Hindemith sonata (Mercury), recently reviewed in this column. It is lighter and brisker. The Dutilleux sonatina is of little consequence, but a Marcello sonata adorns the program. A strange assortment of American music is on a London LP (298, $4.95), with Copland's tender "Four Piano Blues" as its attraction. The composer plays them in an amiable free style that would be very difficult to convey through the printed music. The cello pieces of Bloch are not among his best efforts and Barber's well-made "Adagio for Strings" is so much like the Prelude to Fauré's "Pelléas et Mélisande" and the home-spun English style that it is sad to contemplate how widely it represents American music abroad.

—ARTHUR BERGER.

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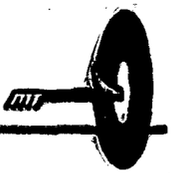

THE recorded score of Cole Porter's "Out of This World" is with us, sung by the Broadway cast (Columbia LP 4390, $5.45; 78 rpm set 980, $8.45). The show, as you probably know, has to do with Jupiter's ungodly holiday from Olympus. The score hardly adds up to another "Kiss Me, Kate." There is no such dazzling cornucopia of songs, witty and romantic, but that is not to say that "Out of This World" hasn't its own blinding charms. This Cole Porter is a *numero*. We have always been immensely taken by his treatment of sex, in a world which tends to view that function with pomposity or coyness or gross vulgarity. And here is Mr. Porter again, riotously good-humored, acting as though the whole matter were the greatest fun in the world and telling everybody about it in at once the loudest and most dextrous terms. Irresistible. One of the earliest numbers in the show strikes us as such a masterpiece that everything else seems a little anticlimactic. This gem is "I Jupiter, I Rex," in which you must imagine George Jongeyans confessing his fatigue with blasé goddesses to such effect that a properly classical chorus breaks into Aristophanes' old Yale cheer: "Brek-ke-ke-kex-kex-kex" (which happens to rhyme very conveniently with Mr. Porter's favorite monosyllable). This syncopated enthusiasm moves Jupiter to explain specifically that what he really craves is "a merry mortal with a sassy air, and a baby-blue thirty-two brassiere," or, as he develops the theme a moment later, "a pretty mortal with a merry air, and a not-too-plump bump-bump derrière." These godlike suggestions and the responsive Greek cheering seem to us to add up to the prize antiphony and absurdity of the season. And for others of our admittedly emancipated tastes there are still other delights—especially the vigorous chants of Charlotte Greenwood as Juno. "Out of This World" will do very nicely. You can't have a "Kiss Me, Kate" every year.

Nor can you have anything to match Kurt Weill's famous "Die Dreigroschenoper" ("The Three Penny Opera"). Ever since 1928, when it was first produced in Germany, all through the years when Adolf Hitler tried to suppress every vestige of it, this work has had for many admirers a unique and obsessing appeal. Loosely derived as to plot from John Gay's "Beggar's Opera," it is really a musical metaphor for the wretchedness, the proletarian spirit and irony, the melancholy lyricism of Germany in the years immediately following World War I. The prime strength of the piece is, of course, the musical power of the Weill who then still lived in Germany, a subtle, wry, and mordant composer whose whole tone was lightened, and sometimes slickened, during his subsequent career in American operetta. "The Three Penny Opera" is a collection of mock-simple, popular-style numbers infused throughout with calculated effects of awkwardness which, thanks to Weill's genius, result in a forlorn musical poetry of great distinction. The opening and closing fox trot, "Moritat," is surely one of the ghostliest tunes in history — it has haunted this department for years. A good portion of the "Dreigroschenoper" may now be had in a long-playing compilation of recordings by its early singers, including Kurt Gerron and Lotte Lenja (Capitol LP 8117, $5.).

Another long-player is expressly designed for Cornellians, but will speak warmly to other hearts. This is "Cornell Music" (Cornell Alumni Assn., $4.85) and it includes a large aggregation of the same, sung on one side by the Cornell Glee Club, and played on the other by the Cornell Concert Band and the University's undergraduate carilloneur—known in Ithaca as the Chimemaster. The Glee Club, as might be expected, does handsomely with "Far Above Cayuga's Waters" and the "Evening Song," which is widely known elsewhere as "Gaudeamus Igitur." To these profane ears Cornell's football marches are rather lacking in distinctiveness — though smartly played—but we are again possessed by the spirit of Cayuga when the Chimemaster begins to toll out his evening chores and, just as it says in the accompanying literature, between the rich clangor of the bells may be heard the twilight birdsong and the crickets' springtime chorus on The Hill.

It is possible to return to jazz without too great a shock through the Benny Goodman Sextet's characteristic, highly finished chamber music operation on "Lullaby of the Leaves" (Columbia 39121, 79¢). But the customers are warned that that other senior Chicagoan, Gene Krupa, with his small hot combination, will disturb any quiet evening with his *presto* version of "Blues My Naughtie Sweetie Gives to Me." We like its style (RCA-Victor 20-4026, 79¢).

—WILDER HOBSON.

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THE GOLDEN AGE

(*Continued from page 49*)

employing Bori and McCormack, plus Caruso in combinations with Ruffo, Farrar, and Scotti; not to mention "Golden Voices Sing Light Music," in which, if you please, "light music" on the one hand is Alma Gluck singing "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny"—why not the Händel she did so magnificently?—or, on the other, Rosa Ponselle singing Massenet's "Elégie." As a final instance of confusion consider the final specimen of "light music" in this collection: Gluck and Louise Homer singing "Abide with Me"!

IN all of these there are commanding instances of interpretative art (for example, McCormack's incomparable "Il Mio Tesoro," from "Don Giovanni," on the disc called "The Golden Age at the Metropolitan," though he never sang it, or any Mozart, there) and a good deal of sound that today's singers can only envy (the great tomb scene from "Aida," in the version of Ponselle and Martinelli). But it is no aggrandizement of them to apply inappropriate labels—the "Golden Age," "Golden Duets," "Immortal Treasury of Immortal Performances," etc.

After all, these are not refrigerators being forced upon unwilling Eskimos, who don't need them and don't want them; they are burning examples of musical fervor made available, finally, to a public long chilled for lack of them. Labeling snake oil "Magic Elixir" never sold a second bottle to a dissatisfied customer, nor will calling a miscellany of fiddle and cello playing "Magic Strings" soothe the savage breast of the fellow who really wants Phil Spitalny's all-girl orchestra. By equating Kreisler and Casals with Evelyn and Her Magic Violin RCA's copywriters have inflated Spitalny's catch-penny to their own exclusive level or debased the currency *they* command to cheap scrip. It really matters little which, for the outcome is the same in either case.

The announcement of these releases carries with it the promise of future issues in which some of the newer gold of the RCA Victor catalogue will be mined: the Glyndebourne Mozart operas, sonata performances of Kreisler and Rachmaninoff, the chamber music of Rubinstein, Heifetz, and Feuermann, the Brahms double concerto of Feuermann and Heifetz, the latter's playing of Beethoven with Toscanini, etc. We are sure their technical problems can be met by the RCA Victor engineers; but what adjectives are left?

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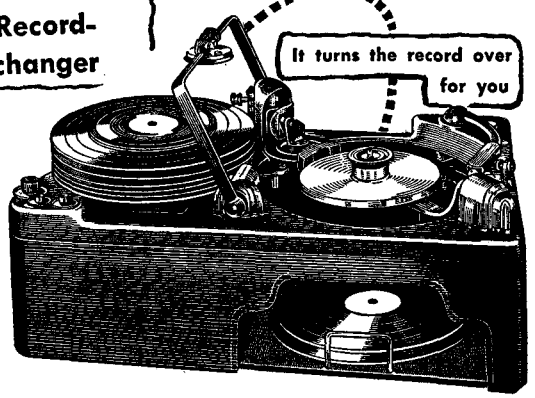

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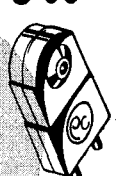

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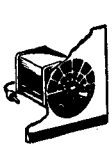

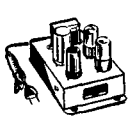

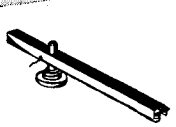

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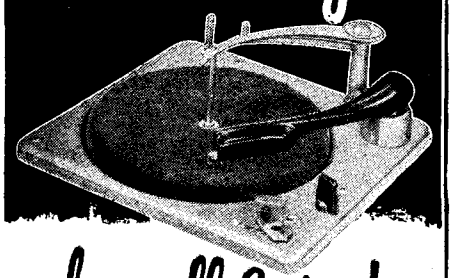

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Pop Roundup

RCA VICTOR'S reluctance to plunge pop-wise into the long-play field is apparently ebbing, and that fact presently furnishes good news to devotees of music from the Swing Era (roughly, the Thirties). The company's vast project of making its "Immortal Performances" available on the new speeds includes some of the great jazz and pop material from an age when bandleaders were gods and crooners possessed the power to induce strange spasmodic symptoms among females, junior grade.

Some of the selections reproduced now have been unavailable since the year of their original issuance, and in several instances it's possible that one number justifies the price of the set—which is sometimes gratifying, as RCA has seen fit to put only three selections on each ten-inch side. In some cases the term "Immortal" denotes critical acclaim; in others it may denote past commercial success. Programming Tommy Dorsey, Larry Clinton, Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, and Hal Kemp on a single disc twelve years ago might have aroused violent apathy among cliques dedicated to one or another single idol. Today, however, in perspective they appear to be cut from much the same cloth, with only superficial stylistic variations. (Only Ted Weems appears really out of place in this company.) This particular disc is DANCE BAND HITS (RCA LPT-2). Dorsey is present with "Boogie Woogie" (reportedly a two-million seller), Clinton with "Marta," Miller with "Song of the Volga Boatmen." Kemp does "Got a Date with an Angel," and Duke does "Mood Indigo." Weems's infamous cornball contribution is "Heartaches."

There's more jazz emphasis in THEME SONGS (LPT-1). Goodman, Barnet, Hampton, Ellington, Shaw, and Louis Armstrong are present with a group of the more distinctive signatures. KEYBOARD KINGS OF JAZZ (LPT-4) affords an especially accessible selection of jazz performances. The only side of even fairly recent vintage is Count Basie's self-descriptive "Swingin' the Blues." Also included are Meade "Lux" Lewis's "Honky Tonk Train" and Earl Hines's "Boogie Woogie on St. Louis Blues." "Fats" Waller's "Honeysuckle Rose" is that rare cutting wherein the late great departs from his usual rhythm style to "concertize" his classic.

SMALL COMBO HITS (LPT-3) is noteworthy for its inclusion of Bunny Berigan's long-missing "In a Mist," a sensitive orchestration of the Beiderbecke opus. It also contains "A Jam Session at Victor," featuring Berigan, T. Dorsey, and Waller in an unusual, informal moment. Goodman's quartet, Shaw's Gramercy Five, Lionel Hampton, and Coleman Hawkins are also on the bill.

The vast RCA archives also have been plumbed to produce a collection entitled COLUMBO, CROSBY, SINATRA (LPT-5) featuring three crooners named Russ, Bing, and Frank. The Columbo and Crosby sides date back to the early Thirties. The latter appears as soloist in a heavily dramatized "I Surrender, Dear," with Gus Arnheim's orch. Sinatra's "Night and Day" dates back to his Dorsey days, and has more quality than most of his later efforts.

Dance Discs

There are two new LP issues in Columbia's Dance Date series. These are continuous instrumental medleys featuring standard songs and designed specifically for dancing. With good basic material to work with the label's various baton wavers have strived to outdo each other in producing tasteful arrangements and ideal tempos. A surprise entry this month is GEORGE SIRAVO (CL-6146), who heretofore has limited his disc chores to arranging and conducting backgrounds for vocal artists. The dance beat on these sides tops anything we've heard previously in the project. Selections include "Got a Date with an Angel," "Isn't It Romantic," "Dearly Beloved," etc. The other entry is PAUL WESTON (CL-6162). Weston's instrumental work is familiar through many successful Capitol releases. Now he's a Columbia musical director, and his new dance set rates with his best. The tunes are of top-drawer quality and his scorings are easy to dance to and/or listen to. Included are "You Were Meant for Me," "Over the Rainbow," and "Embraceable You."

Some recommended singles: Guy Lombardo's VELVET LIPS (DEC 27393). . . . Tommy Dorsey's AS TIME GOES BY (instrumental) and LULLABY OF BROADWAY (DEC 27396). Tropical Tempos: MAMBO RHAPSODY by Alberto Iznaga y su orquesta (with piano solo) (DEC 21334); Edmundo Ros's YANKEE DOODLE SAMBA (LON 920) and WOODEN SOLDIER SAMBA (LON 847).

—BILL SIMON.

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Songs Mostly in Cycles

BRAHMS: *"Vier Ernste Gesänge";* also SCHUMANN: *"Frauenliebe und Leben." Kathleen Ferrier, alto, with John Newmark, piano.* (London LP 271, $5.95.)

BRAHMS: *"Gestillte Sehnsucht," etc.;* also SCHUMANN: *"Liederkreis." Lorna Sydney, alto, with Wilhelm Loibner, piano.* (Vanguard LP 411, $5.95.)

MAHLER: *"Das Knaben Wunderhorn." Lorna Sydney, alto, and Alfred Poell, baritone, with Felix Prohaska conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra.* (Vanguard LP set, $11.90.)

MOZART: *"Dans un bois solitaire," and five other songs;* also SCHUBERT: *"Lied der Mignon," and six other songs. Genevieve Warner, soprano, with Franz Rupp piano.* (Columbia LP 4365, $5.45.)

WOLF: *"Fussreise," "Anakreons Grab," "Der Musikant," and seventeen other songs. Alfred Poell, baritone, with Franz Holletschek, piano.* (Westminster LP 50-48, $5.95.)

WOLF: *"Bedeckt mich mit Blumen," "In der Frühe," "Verborgenheit," and thirteen other songs. Elisabeth Schumann, soprano, with George Reeves, piano.* (Allegro LP 98, $5.45.)

FOR CONVENIENCE the alphabetical arrangement above will suffice; but for interest there is little doubt that first place goes to Mahler's "Das Knaben Wunderhorn," not only for the pleasure of hearing these fine songs in totality and with orchestra, but even more for the quality of accomplishment by all concerned. Neither Poell nor Sydney nor Prohaska is without previous recorded history, but none of them have made quite so strong an impression in anything else.

Whether this is a matter of mutual compatability is difficult to say, but it sounds to me also a matter of clever engineering by whoever set up this performance in Vienna. Miss Sydney's rich, sometimes over-vibrant voice has been treated with such skill that all its expressive quality is retained, while thinning it out slightly to the advantage of dead-center pitch. On the other hand, Poell's drier sound has been brought to a microphone arrangement that gives it all its inherent resonance. Orchestral detail likewise has been balanced adroitly.

Since both singers are able technicians and thoroughly versed in the content of this music, the outcome is a performance of absorbing eloquence, fine musicality, and, I would say, definitive place in Mahler's recorded literature. Miss Sydney's "Das Irdische Leben" and "Verlorne Muh" are both superior instances of lieder singing, and if Poell's "Tambourgesell" does not match the version of Schlusnus, it is close enough to measure against it. In addition, the finely atmospheric orchestral accompaniment by Prohaska is a plus to be reckoned with. Mahler enthusiasts will embrace the whole set eagerly, but I believe any person at all susceptible to lieder will find it to his taste.

While with Sydney and Poell I may mention that neither measures to the Mahler standard in the other discs noted above. Miss Sydney comes closer, for her artistry remains of the same order, though the broad pulsation of her middle register is heavy for the intimacy of the Schumann songs and occasionally tends to cloud the pitch in the Brahms "Nachtigall" and "Des Liebsten Schwur." In the songs with viola Emil Morawetz is a fine string player, but the lack of vocal control is still bothersome to my ear. Poell's Wolf songs are typical of his musicianship and seriousness, but except for "An Eine Aeolsharfe" and "Der Musikant" there is neither quickening imagination nor temperamental spark to differentiate among twenty fine songs in which the differences are frequently very subtle ones. However, it is no small matter to have such fine songs as "Rattenfänger," "Feuerreiter," and "Fussreise" generally available. In all cases the presence of German and English texts is gratefully noted.

The long-expected "Vier Ernste Gesänge" by Ferrier—first rumored many months ago as a 78-rpm project by English Decca—has finally borne fruit, and what fruit! Rich, firm, fully packed, with both the bloom of youth and the ripeness of maturity in every phrase. As for vocal mastery, here it is in magnificent measure, with every inflection of the Biblical word matched by understanding art. It is almost too much to expect equally sustained quality in the Schumann "Frauenliebe und Leben" on the over side, but the fact is that a Schumann fancier could make out a case for considering it superior. Not only among the present company of phonographic interpreters, such as Marian Anderson and Uta Graf, but in a list that stretches back through Lotte Lehmann, Helen Traubel, Astra Desmond, and Ria Ginster to Elsa Alsen, Ferrier stands alone for equal attention to word and tone, in cleanness of musical execution and richness of sound. Maybe there is more to be said, but it eludes me. John Newmark is the fine pianist, and the sound is all one expects of London. I have one complaint to register: the German text is omitted.

Kathleen Ferrier—"vocal mastery in magnificent measure."

As attentive listeners to this year's Metropolitan Opera performances are occasionally aware, Genevieve Warner is a young soprano with a clear, bell-like voice who has been singing the First Boy in "Magic Flute," the Milliner in "Der Rosenkavalier," and other hard-to-hear parts. When heard her voice suggests the uncommon kind of purity and well-floated tone that distinguishes both sides of this introductory record. Beyond this physical fact, however, there is little to be said. Whether it is Mozart's "Das Veilchen" or "Das Lied der Trennung," Schubert's "Lied der Mignon" or "Im Abendroth," Miss Warner performs with matter-of-fact excellence — which, while excellent, is still matter-of-fact. It is certainly uncommon to hear a young singer with so lovely an unspoiled voice and so much easy, well-produced tone at her disposal, but there is no overt evidence that she really knows what she is singing about. The vocal consequences, while eminently pleasant, have little to do with Mozart or Schubert. Rupp, for that matter, is much paler than his custom. The reproduction is uniformly excellent.

It is almost a sad anti-climax to mention here the Elisabeth Schumann collection of Wolf songs: her art and vocal quality at this period of her career can support evaluation on their own, but the recording sounds (besides those noted above) as if it were made in a closet—and a small one at that. She sings "Bedeckt mich mit Blumen" and other quiet songs with great tenderness and reasonable control, but anything of larger scope or greater range is tentative. Among the infrequently heard songs are "O wär dein Haus," "Sie blasen zum Abmarsch," and "Nun wand're Maria." George Reeves is the deft, mostly inaudible, pianist. —THE EDITOR.

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Three Speeds Forward

HARVEY TAYLOR

BECAUSE of certain damaging admissions I intend to make in the following paragraphs, I should like to establish at the outset a reasonable admiration for my courage and professional dedication. I am employed as a music and theatre reporter, and the recording companies favor me with their new releases. It is this phase of what I like to think of as my career that has led me into an uncharted area of musical experience about which I am driven, at whatever cost, to report.

The other evening, after months of evading the subject, I put on the Columbia recording of Darius Milhaud's Symphony No. 1 and settled to listening. Close at hand was liquid refreshment and the record envelope with its annotations.

In the course of my professional duties I have from time to time described Milhaud's music as "workmanlike," "lucid," "neat in form," etc.; but the music has never impressed me very strongly one way or the other. Here, however, was a different Milhaud. From the first few measures I sensed a new impulse at work, resulting in a bravely venturesome, unfamiliar style. First of all, the tempo—a driving, churning pace that made the glass toward which my hand had groped tremble nervously. Then there was something revolutionary about the timbre or tone color — an eerie, breathless sound with violins and woodwinds playing in generally untrod territory at the very top of the range. Here, I decided, was a thrilling new music.

As I skipped hastily across the biographical matter about Milhaud to find out what the annotator had to say about this departure in technique, I was detained by a quotation from Virgil Thomson describing Milhaud's music as "simple as a friendly conversation and in its better moments exactly as poetic and profound." My friendly conversations at their most poetic and profound never sounded like THIS. As I hurried on I found a quotation from Milhaud himself describing the first movement as "very melodic and quiet, with great feeling for nature." Adjoined was the composer's marking: *"Pastorale, modérément animé."*

Since the composer was also conducting the performance, I accepted the obvious frenzy as traceable to a Gallic conception of moderate animation. The second movement, marked *"tres vif,"* certainly was. It was the damnedest *"tres vif."* But with the third movement I was compelled to admit something was at fault. Milhaud describes it as beginning "with a theme like a chorale, the character of the movement deeply tender." Nothing that came out of the speaker could by any imaginative stretch agree with this description.

At the risk of seeming foolish, I must add that the fault was not wholly mine. For many years now I have been a martyr at trying to find in the music what the annotators described. I have, in fact, even cultivated a kind of dogged patience about it. For example, when I first heard Dvorak's Symphony No. 1, I made a special effort to get a recording, because I thought the work so attractive. Reading the notes, I discovered: "Another endearing characteristic of Dvorak's First Symphony is its delicious naïveté. As Sir Donald Francis Tovey says so well 'it trails clouds of glory not only with the outlook of a child but with the solemnity of a kitten running after its tail.'" Sir Donald did say this, and very well, but I had an awful time fitting it to the music.

Thus, I was still entranced by my Milhaud when any record fan knows what was what all the while. It was, of course, a long-playing disc of the 33-rpm variety which I had put on a turntable set for 78 rpm. I was merely hearing it at slightly more than twice the speed intended by the composer. A less earnest reporter would have slid around in the back when his wife left the room and, while pretending to be busy at the bar, make the proper adjustment and start all over again as if it were a new record, hoping meanwhile that the flush on his face had subsided.

But my reaction was not as simple as that. I must admit that I like it better that way. Often when alone in the house I sneak in and play it at 78 rpm, meanwhile thinking strange and exciting thoughts. So far I've held this weird new vice under strict control and haven't yielded to the temptation of playing, say, Wagner's "Magic Fire Music" in a 33-rpm version at 45 or 78. I suppose it's silly to think that some enterprising composer will eventually write a work to be played optionally at 33, 45, or 78 rpm, but it's nice to speculate on the annotator who would have to write three separate interpretations thereof.

Harvey Taylor is music editor of the Detroit Times.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Opera in English?

SIR: A heartfelt thank you . . . for your stand on opera in English [*SRL* Jan. 27]. It is quite remarkable that this idea is so often advanced by convinced opera lovers, who hold their own noses at it but who are willing to make this sacrifice for the sake of the survival, they say, of the art. I feel it is a mistake to think that one can convert people to opera by means of something which to those already converted seems distinctly second choice if not second rate.

HENRY W. KNEPLER.

Chicago, Ill.

Concerning an Index

SIR: On the letters page of the February RECORDINGS there are three letters expressing a desire for an index of your valued record reviews. I have been wondering if any of these correspondents or others who want the same thing would be interested in knowing that such an index already exists including not only reviews from *SRL* but those in ten other periodicals. The "Index of Record Reviews," compiled by Kurtz Myers, of the Detroit Public Library, is a regular feature of *Notes*, the quarterly journal of the Music Library Association. Not only can the reader learn in which of these periodicals a recording has been reviewed, but he will find along with each entry a symbol indicating the tone of the review, whether favorable, unfavorable, or noncommittal. A movement has been under way for some time in the Association to have this index cumulated and published once a year, and this will certainly be done if a sufficient response is assured to cover the expenses. Non-librarians may not realize that the Association membership includes an impressive number of laymen (membership $4.50) or that *Notes* is available to non-members at $3 a year.

PHILIP L. MILLER.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader (and Librarian) Miller suggests that persons interested in either service address Miss Mary Rogers, Music Library Association, c/o Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D.C. Beyond this, we acknowledge receipt of some thirty-odd endorsements of the proposition that* RECORDINGS *be indexed—an encouraging evidence of interest, but hardly enough on which to proceed. We leave the subject open for another month.*

Fifth Symposium

SIR: The Fifth Annual Symposium of the International Federation of Music Students (Juilliard Chapter) will be held at the Yale University School of Music from Monday, March 12, through Saturday, March 17. . . . This year at Yale the idea of the symposium has been expanded to include lectures by prominent musicians, followed by panel discussions of problems of musicians and their social function. Paul Hindemith, Stefan Wolpe, and Dimitri Mitropolous will speak. The symposium is open to anyone interested. All events . . . will be open to the public without charge.

MARTHA BIXLER.

New Haven, Conn.

Unissued Ponselle

SIR: I wonder whether your readers who have been clamoring for the release of new, and the re-release of old, recordings by Rosa Ponselle are aware that some of the rarest of her recordings have become again fleetingly available. New pressings by His Master's Voice and Columbia from the original matrices have recently been offered for sale by Addison Foster, 1226 Montgomery Avenue, Narberth, Pennsylvania. Mr. Foster's earlier offering was the celebrated Scena from "La Vestale." Recently he has offered early Ponselle recordings of "Elsa's Dream" and an aria from "La Juive." The former, recorded in 1919, had not been previously released.

KURTZ MYERS.

Detroit, Mich.

"Beggar's Opera"

SIR: I shall greatly appreciate any information that you may be able to give me concerning any recordings that may have been made of any of the songs of John Gay's "Beggar's Opera."

FRANCIS A. DRUMM.

Worcester, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Not merely some but virtually all of the "Beggar's Opera" was circulated by RCA (in an English-made issue directed by Michael Mudie) during the late Thirties and early Forties. The album was numbered 772. However, I know of no project to restore it, though it would certainly be a desirable LP. On the other hand, I have heard rumors that Max Goberman is actively engaged in recording a version of his own of the John Gay score.*

Toscanini "Midsummer Night"

SIR: I note the appearance of a complete recording of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" music by Clemens Krauss. This, of course, brings to mind a similar project under Arturo Toscanini. . . . Please enlighten me, if possible, as to when RCA Victor intends to allow album 1280 to take its rightful place in the LP catalogue.

JAMES W. KEELER.

Drexel Hill, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *As noted on page* 56, *another full-length version of the same matter has just been issued by Decca from Deutsche Grammophon masters. In this connection the query was posed to RCA Victor, with the reply that their masters were not suitable for LP usage. They were, of course, waxes rather than tapes.*

45 rpm and Classics

SIR: I am finding it very difficult to get an answer to a simple question and I hope you may be able to help me. Is it true, as some salespeople tell me, that new recordings of classical music will not be available on 45-rpm records?

ROBERT A. MILLER.

Bloomington, Ind.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *No such rumors are current in this area; and the advance announcements of RCA Victor show 45 rpm listings for many months to come. Moreover, company sources declare that no changes are contemplated in the program.*

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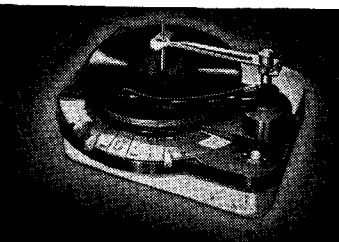

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